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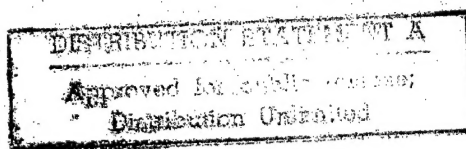
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# USSR Report

MILITARY AFFAIRS

MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No. 1, January 1984



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# USSR REPORT

## MILITARY AFFAIRS

### MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No 1, January 1984

Except where indicated otherwise in the table of contents the following is a complete translation of the Russian-language monthly journal VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL.

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## WORLD WAR II: MILITARY LEADERSHIP QUALITIES EXAMINED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 84 (signed to press 27 Dec 83) pp 10-21

[Article by Hero of the Soviet Union, Army Gen P. Lashchenko: "On the Work Style of Military Leaders"]

[Text] Our military leaders have learned the art of leadership from V. I. Lenin. He worked out a special style of work which underlies the activities of the entire party and all leading workers. By a Leninist style in work we understand an aggregate of procedures and methods for the activities of the party, state, social (including also the military) personnel by which leadership is provided over all spheres of building a communist society.

The necessity of mastering a Leninist style of work is one of the most important demands of the Communist Party on the leading cadres. It was reaffirmed by the June (1983) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee. The plenum emphasized that in the future the party will give the closest attention to the "ubiquitous establishing of the Leninist style of work, a style that is professional, creative, innovative and permeated with high ideological loyalty and implacability for everything that is stagnant and runs counter to the standards of socialist morality and a collectivist way of life."<sup>1</sup>

At present, in line with the increased educational and ideological level of the personnel in the Soviet Armed Forces, as never before the role of the military leader has increased in training and indoctrinating the personnel, in improving the combat and mobilizational readiness of the troops, as well as in organizing and conducting combat operations. Consequently, the carrying out of the new complex and responsible task confronting the military leader requires a further improvement in the style and methods of troop leadership.

*The working out of the plan for conducting an operation is a most important task requiring a maximum strain on the commander's mind and will.* This process is preceded by a thorough elucidation of the superior-level plans, the tasks of the field force in the operation and the methods of carrying them out, a thorough assessment of the situation and the vision of how combat operations will develop.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War, the postwar maneuvers and exercises teaches that a trained, experienced military leader even in the course of studying the missions of his field force determines the basic questions in the

forthcoming plan: the possible direction of the main thrust, the nature of the fire damage to the enemy and the methods of defeating the enemy, where, when and what groupings will be destroyed and what areas (lines) will be captured.

The commander must always personally study the goal and missions of an operation. In this instance he will remain confident that his plan to a maximum degree corresponds to the overall concept of the superior command. He can involve a rather broad group of officers in assessing the situation in the process of working out his plan.

For this it is essential, after studying the goal and missions of the operation, for the commander to formulate the basic idea of his overall concept and then himself or through the chief of staff set the following tasks for the directorates and sections: what calculations must be made on the basis of this idea, what variations must be worked out for the individual elements of the plan and proposals, on what questions and by what time they should be reported in. Then, in the course of assessing the situation the commander will be able to receive effective, calculational sound proposals from the leading generals and officers of his staff and employ them, if it is found necessary, in his own plan.

Regardless of the fact that we had long since established a single and well-developed method for working out the plan for conducting an operation, many military leaders often showed their own "hand" in this. For example, some initially heard the reports of a large group of persons, including the chief of staff, the commanders of the branches of troops and certain officers from the field force staff, and then adopted their plan. Others heard proposals on the plan only from the chief of staff and then made corrections and changes in them. Mar SU K. K. Rokossovskiy often worked this way. Many just clarified certain questions of interest to them, particularly about the enemy, and then adopted a plan using their working map. During the years of the Great Patriotic War, Gen I. D. Chernyakhovskiy proceeded precisely in this manner and his plans were always well reasoned, clear in exposition and obvious for the executors. Since the last method makes it possible to adopt a plan in a maximum limited time, it is most acceptable, in my view, at present.

During the period of the Great Patriotic War, a majority of our military leaders rather quickly took bold decisions and without hesitation assumed responsibility for the results of carrying them out. However, there were instances when a commander, having already adopted a plan, incorporated corrections, and not because he saw any flaws in it but merely because a senior military chief doubted individual conclusions. It also happened that a military chief took a correct decision but, having started to carry out, encountered serious difficulties. In hesitating over his conclusions, he altered the plan although this was not necessary. A lack of confidence in the correctness of the adopted plan shows insufficient maturity in a military chief and his inability to reason profoundly and defend his viewpoint well, and to steadily carry out each plan. A combat situation demands not only that all questions be settled with initiative and creatively, but also the correctness of one's decisions be defended firmly and soundly.

Indicative in this regard are the actions of Mar SU K. K. Rokossovskiy during the period of preparing for the offensive by the troops of the First Belorussian Front in the 1944 Belorussian Operation. Proceeding from the set mission,

the grouping of the opposing enemy and the nature of the terrain, K. K. Rokossovskiy decided to make two strikes with the right wing of the front and both strikes were conceived of as the main ones. Here is what he wrote later: "All of this ran counter to the established view according to which one main thrust was made in an offensive.... The plan for the offensive was finally worked out at Headquarters on 22 and 23 May...and the decision for two attacks on the right wing was criticized. The Supreme Commander in Chief and his deputies insisted that one main attack be made.... Twice I was asked to go into a neighboring room in order to reflect on the Headquarters' proposal. After each such 'reflection,' I defended my decision with redoubled force. Persuaded that I was firmly defending our viewpoint, Stalin approved the plan for the operation in the form in which we presented it.

"The insistency of the commander of the front,' he said, 'shows that the organization of the offensive has been carefully thought out. This is a dependable guarantee for success.'"2

*After adopting the plan, the most important thing in the work is the prompt issuing of the combat missions to subordinate commanders and chiefs indicating the most effective methods of carrying them out.* The missions can be given personally by the commander or upon his authorization by the chief of staff in visiting the troops or over communications equipment as well as by combat documents which are transmitted via the liaison officers.

However, it is not so much a question of the method of giving the missions as it is how these are understood by the subordinates and how they proceed in carrying them out. This is what was written about the style of leadership in this area for the front commander, Army Gen I. D. Chernyakhovskiy, by his chief of staff, Col Gen A. P. Pokrovskiy: "Chernyakhovskiy...demanded that the mission be given to the soldier on such a scale that he, in following Suvorov's rule, understood 'his own maneuver.' The ideas formulated in the plans of the commander were understood by all the men and were recognized and supported by them. I often heard from the mouths of the soldiers and commanders: 'With such a commander you fear neither fire nor water'."3

Gen I. D. Chernyakhovskiy always preferred to give combat missions to the formation commanders on the spot and in turn, to each at his observation post or to two commanders, if their divisions were cooperating closely. He always gave the missions to the artillery in the field. Here he also frequently gave rather detailed instructions on cooperation, particularly in an attack or in committing the second echelons of divisions, armies and mobile groups to combat. Many other military leaders followed such a method of giving combat missions.

*On the organization of cooperation.* The experience of the Great Patriotic War persuades one that if a commander was not himself closely concerned with the detailed organization of troop cooperation, particularly in breaking through enemy defenses, crossing major water barriers, liberating cities and carrying out other difficult missions, his troops frequently suffered a defeat. Conversely, a commander who went closely into the organization of troop cooperation and demanded the same from subordinate commanders, successfully carried out even the most difficult missions. The crucial prerequisite for the successful

breaking through in the Lwow-Sandomierz Offensive Operation in 1944 was, I am profoundly convinced, the complete, effective and detailed organization of troop cooperation. Several days prior to the start of the operation, all the divisions of our 60th Army were visited by the front commander, Mar SU I. S. Konev. He demanded that each divisional commander report to him everything about the enemy, his own plan and in detail on the questions of the cooperation of the infantry with the artillery, tanks and aviation. After this he himself worked out all the questions of organizing troop cooperation and here went into as much detail as if he were himself in the role of the battalion or company commander. Without such thorough and careful coordination of the efforts of all the branches of troops, one could scarcely count on then breaking through the heavily fortified enemy defenses, to develop the breakthrough into the operational depth and successfully achieve the ultimate goal of the operation.

Closest study should be given to the experience of organizing cooperation during offensive operations in the years of the last war by the commander of the 5th Army, General, subsequently Mar SU, N. I. Krylov. He conducted this work skillfully, purposefully and always successfully. After the planning of the operation had been completed on all levels, N. I. Krylov personally worked out the questions of cooperation with the formation commanders initially on maps and a prepared sandbox and then directly in the field. He gave cooperation instructions according to the most probable variations of the course of the operation. These had a concrete nature and helped all subordinates to understand in detail the procedure and sequence of combat operations to defeat the enemy.<sup>4</sup>

In working directly in the formations and units, N. I. Krylov involved a large number of army staff officers in this. In one of the regiments of each division he personally organized the cooperation and saw to it that all the subunit commanders correctly understood not only their missions but also the ways of implementing them. Then he ordered the divisional commander to conduct the same work in the remaining regiments and himself went on to other formations. Gen N. I. Krylov gave great importance to supervising the fulfillment of the orders issued by him in organizing cooperation, he was concerned with this himself and demanded the same from the army staff as well as the chiefs of the branches of troops and services.

The commander of the Leningrad Front, Mar SU L. A. Govorov, very ably organized cooperation. He demanded from the formation commanders that they, having carefully studied the terrain on the forward edge and in the immediate depth of the enemy defenses, select in their own rear approximately the same area and here organized in all details cooperation with the involvement of the troops. The commander of the front personally checked the ability of the army, corps and divisional commanders and sometimes even the regimental and battalion commanders to coordinate the efforts of all the branches of troops and strictly followed up on whether they had a complete knowledge of the capabilities and nature of employment of all the resources cooperating with them. All of this greatly ensured the success of the offensive operations.

At various times I happened to serve under a number of well-known military leaders who possessed an uniqueness of character and style of work. For this reason it is instructive to compare their activities both in the course of preparing and conducting operations during the years of the last war as well as

at command-staff exercises in the postwar time. Characteristically, all of them had previously undergone approximately the same schooling in training and service growth. Among them were active participants in the Civil and Great Patriotic Wars, some of them had carried out their international duty outside the motherland and later commanded formations in the Soviet-Finnish War of 1939-1940. Communists with a long party membership, they all possessed profound knowledge of military affairs, and they had rich human and combat experience, a firm character and strong will. Seemingly their style of troop leadership should be largely similar. However, in sometimes holding the same positions, they carried out almost identical combat missions in largely different ways.

For example, Army Gen P. A. Batov like no one else was able to unite and train the officer personnel of his staff. No matter under what difficult conditions the 65th Army which he commanded was fighting, on the staff there was always a calm, business-like situation and everyone worked intensely but without nervousness and confusion. An example in all of this was set by the commander himself. Polite and tactful and not allowing even a hint of coarseness, he at the same time was extremely demanding both on himself and subordinates, he did not allow the slightest disobedience and dealt strictly with any negligence and laxness in work. However, no one complained for his reprimands were always valid and "merited."

It would be no secret to say that on certain other army staffs, the working situation at times developed differently. In the collectives of staff officers one did not feel such solidarity as was described above. As for the great exactingness of certain commanders, this often not so much disciplined as it did repel the officers and they would not willingly approach him with any proposals. And if such a commander summoned someone and demanded a report on the situation, the officer went with trepidation, he reported incoherently and usually omitted something. The commander immediately rebuked him for ignorance, he vehemently accused him of the inability to perform service duties and even, it did happen, insulted him. Gradually such a "style" became a system of dealing with subordinates and all the staff officers quickly came to know of this. If one did have to present himself before such a commander, then one thought not so much about how to report the situation or one's proposal more understandably and convincingly but merely how to avoid a dressing down. For this reason on such a staff little initiative and creativity were shown in the work and everyone endeavored to do just what was ordered. Worst of all, the commander himself clearly liked the staff officers to shake in his presence.

*As is known, the assembling and generalization of situational data precede the adopting of a plan or the clarifying of missions in the course of an operation.* On the staff of Army Gen P. I. Batov, with the good teamwork in its functioning, all the required information was very effectively assembled and processed. All data which merited attention were immediately made available to those sections and chiefs which needed them. The commander himself received the most important information first hand, that is, from the formation commanders or those army staff officers who at that moment were in the units directly engaged in fighting. Each staff officer realized well how valuable were any new data for the army commander and the staff and for this reason there were no instances when the data were overlooked or received late.



All information as it was received was channeled into the operations section where it was analyzed, compared with the previously received, generalized and in the form of conclusions then reported to the commander or the chief of staff. Feeling personal responsibility for the reliability and completeness of the information as well as the conclusions and proposals stemming from it, all the staff officers constantly endeavored to delve into the essence of the facts as deeply as possible and to depict them correctly in the report. P. I. Batov, in turn, did not forget to praise those who had made a most detailed study of the situation, who intelligently formulated the conclusions and ably gave their own proposals on the further course of combat. Such a practice of staff leadership made it possible for the army commander to always have a rather exhaustive knowledge of the situation in the army's combat zone and of all changes in it and to respond immediately to the enemy's plans and actions.

On another staff, the assembling and generalizing of the data were carried out under approximately these same conditions (the circumstances were determined by the situation). However, the process itself occurred differently. The difference was again in the very style of leadership by the army commander and more accurately in the nature of the relations between him and the officers of the staff, the services and sections. Here a procedure had not been instituted where any staff worker who was in the operational units and formations could immediately and directly report to the commander on everything important and essential that had been disclosed in the course of combat. Since all the reports, including the most urgent ones, went only up the chain of command, the army commander was often very late in learning of important information when it was already partially obsolete.

In truth, sometimes an officer who had been in the forward units was summoned to the army commander for a personal report. But here he usually gave only the bare facts, without supplementing them with any commentaries and judgments, as he knew that the army commander might not tolerate this. If someone violated this procedure, in endeavoring to draw conclusions from the facts, he immediately heard that "this is nothing for you to worry about." For this reason, although the staff officers exchanged their own opinions on various questions of the situation and the conduct of the operation and often came up with useful ideas, all of this was not always effectively employed. Under such conditions the army commander and the chief of staff at times found it very difficult to draw the necessary conclusions from the situation quickly and soundly, to take a correct decision and fully utilize all the existing opportunities for the successful carrying out of combat missions.

Gen P. I. Batov and his staff very carefully and painstakingly prepared for the operation both on the offensive and on the defensive. Having received a directive from the front for preparing and conducting the next operation, P. I. Batov together with the chief of staff and other officials carefully studied the aim of the operation and the mission for the army assigned to him and profoundly analyzed the major situational factors. Then he formulated his plan which was immediately written out by the chief of staff or the chief of the operations section. In the course of working out a plan, P. I. Batov clarified just individual data from the officers present or summoned other staff workers for this purpose. But if someone wished to give him new data or voice additional considerations on the combat employment of the branches of troops, he



willingly listened to these opinions, adopting or rejecting them but giving the reasons in either case.

The efficiency in adopting a plan and its precise formulating made it possible for the army staff and all the chiefs of the branches of troops and services to quickly draw up this plan and issue it and the missions to the executors. The organization of cooperation between all the units and formations in the operation was worked out by the army staff just as quickly and precisely under the direct leadership of the commander and on the basis of the adopted plan.

In continuing our analogy, let us say that precisely this work was done somewhat differently and with somewhat less results by the other army commander and his staff. Having received a directive from the front to prepare and conduct an operation, he immediately began to study the received combat mission, to assess the situation and work out a plan. However, he immediately was confronted by a heap of questions which demanded clarification and this naturally took a good deal of time. For various information the army commander summoned both individually and in groups a large number of officers the reports and briefings of which often did not satisfy him. Again there were unjustified rebukes of idleness, the inability to effectively carry out one's duties and so forth. As a result, the army commander himself was distracted from the question at hand and did not allow his subordinates to work, with time being wasted. Ultimately the staff and the chiefs of the branches of troops worked out one or two variations of plans which were reported to the army commander and...subjected to strict criticism by him. However, from his words the men present usually only caught individual fragments of ideas on the basis of which they were to work out the next variation of the plan.

Only as a result of several such "scenes" did finally a plan for the operation emerge, becoming the basis for its planning. But the staff workers were already bowled over from the strain, although the efforts of their labor were rather meager.

And the reason for all of this was the inability of the army commander to correctly organize his own work and the staff's activities. For example, in criticizing subordinates for the unsoundness of their conclusions and proposals, the army commander himself was never able to formulate his own plan quickly and precisely, although he was obliged to do this. Such an army commander did not excel in particular efficiency and productivity in work when it was necessary to adjust or change the plan upon instructions from above or considering an abrupt change in the combat situation.

During the war, some adhered to the opinion that a military leader supposedly did not have to delve into all details himself, particularly in the preparation and course of combat. This is completely wrong. He should always perform his functions fully and settle questions rather profoundly but not make them excessively detailed so as to provide scope for the initiative and independence of subordinates. If one does not go into precisely how subordinates are carrying out their tasks, you will not know anything specific and become a superficial person capable of leading only "generally" and "as a whole." In this instance the military leader remains completely out of touch with what is going on in his troops. If this is pernicious in peacetime, it is criminal during a

war. The greater the detail with which an operation or combat is prepared, the more profoundly the military leader goes into all questions relating to the development of combat and the greater his chances for success. It is no accident that all great military leaders went very closely into all details of the preparation and conduct of combat and never let things take their own course. The ignoring of "minor" questions often led to the nonfulfillment of major tasks. A military leader is obliged to combine a breadth of viewpoint with the detailing of decisions and accuracy of carrying them out.

Mar SU P. K. Koshevoy, in relying on his own combat experience, asserted that without a thorough and profound knowledge and resolution of all "minor" questions it was impossible to break through the prepared enemy defenses, to cross a water barrier or even capture a prisoner. In organizing combat during the years of the last war, P. K. Koshevoy himself always thoroughly and soundly studied the combat missions, he completely evaluated the situation and in detail organized cooperation of the men and weapons, all types of support as well as troop command and control. After such preparatory work neither his subordinates nor the superiors had any doubt as to the success of carrying out the pending mission. As the commander of the LXIII Rifle Corps, P. K. Koshevoy in precisely this manner organized the defeat of the enemy in the Crimea on the Sevastopol sector in 1944 and for which he was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. In a similar manner he readied the formations of the XXXVI Guards Rifle Corps to break through the heavily fortified enemy defenses in East Prussia on the Konigsberg sector, receiving a second Gold Star for skillful troop leadership. With as much detail and thoroughness he instructed his subordinate troops in peacetime for fighting under the conditions of the use of weapons of mass destruction. All exercises and drills conducted by him were as close as possible to combat reality, they were organized without oversimplification, they were unique in their content and the particular features of their methods and aroused all participants to initiative and creativity. All of this comprised that special style of leadership which was inherent precisely to Mar P. K. Koshevoy.

*Thus, combat experience convinces one that the soundest plan can be adopted, the most effective plan of action can be defined and confidently carried out only by a military leader armed with a dialectical approach to an analysis of the facts, capable of foreseeing the development of events and who know how to organize the precise work of his staff as well as flexible control of the subordinate troops. It is impossible to constantly follow the course of combat, to effectively influence this and skillfully and decisively overcome all difficulties and problems without flexible, trained thinking capable of bringing out the essence of all the concealed factors in the mechanism of troop leadership.*

*The uniqueness of a leadership style is clearly apparent in the observance of the Leninist principles of the recruitment and placement of personnel. A military leader must constantly study his subordinates and must patiently train them in the process of actual work, in helping to carry out his official duties. He must boldly promote the capable commanders and decisively remove those who do not meet the requirements of the position held. Here it is very important to systematically and closely supervise their fulfillment of the received orders and instructions. Only by such checking is it possible to ascertain a person's attitude toward his job as well as all his shortcomings, to suggest effective ways to eliminate these and create the necessary conditions for the rapid development and growth*

of subordinates. Here supervision should not be an end in itself but rather a means for the correct indoctrination of the personnel. Here the basic thing is not the formal noting of the positive and negative facts and characteristics but rather the search for the more effective ways and methods for improving the situation on the spot. In the process of control, V. I. Lenin taught, it is essential "to demonstrate and actually provide help which may be small in amount but still real."<sup>5</sup>

For example, having arrived at the staff of the Third Belorussian Front in 1944, "Chernyakhovskiy began by making a careful study of the superior and senior command personnel of the front...and was literally interested in everything: the military knowledge, combat experience and moral-combat qualities of the subordinates.... Ivan Danilovich [Chernyakhovskiy] felt that the better he could unite the various elements of the front's command and staff and focus them on close and enterprising work, the more successfully troop command would be carried out in the forthcoming operation."<sup>6</sup>

In leadership practices each military chief frequently had to speak to his subordinates in giving missions, making analyses, providing information on various questions and noting the ways for overcoming difficulties. The success of any undertaking depended upon how correctly he was able to organize and direct the men. For this reason it was essential to prepare carefully for any speech, to thoroughly think through all the questions and only then give precise, terse but complete instructions so that all subordinates understood the sense of the mission and the essence of the methods for carrying them out.

Naturally, the military leaders carried out these functions differently. For one the text of the speeches was prepared by the staff, the political section or deputies, and he at best cursorily looked through it and then conscientiously read it before the appropriate audience, but without, in essence, having put any of his own thoughts, recommendations or advice into these materials. Another, although using materials prepared for him, would work through carefully and analyze all the data and as a result would give effective instructions to the executors. Still another, the best of all, would prepare personally for the speech, turning to others for help only to clarify various information, viewpoints and so forth. In this instance he went more profoundly into the material and later on gave it more freely and accessibly.

It is always essential to follow the rule: before speaking to people, it is essential to go through all that you intend to say. If you do not clearly understand the essence of the question, then it is better not to say anything at all. A speech addressed to people should be short, convincing and concrete and it is essential to know when to stop on time so that the effect from your main words and arguments is not lessened. A person who does not know how to put forward his thoughts and arguments in a coherent and convincing manner will never become a complete and authoritative leader. And in this area as well it is essential to work with oneself and improve.

*A Soviet military leader is not only a highly trained military specialist but also a socio-political figure and a convinced proponent of CPSU and Soviet government policy in the Army and Navy. The most important trait in his style of work is communist ideological loyalty which consists in his conscious adherence to Marxist-Leninist*

teachings, in a loyalty to the cause of communism and the socialist motherland and a readiness to surrender his life for these ideals.

Troop leadership is exercised on the basis of known patterns and requires accurate consideration of all factors in a specific situation. For this reason a military chief is obliged to constantly proceed from true reality and consider, in the words of V. I. Lenin, "living life" and the development prospects of military affairs.

Under present-day conditions, the demands on the general educational, technical, special and operational-tactical training of a military leader have increased even more. "Any work of control and command," taught V. I. Lenin, "requires special properties...in order to control it is essential to be competent, it is essential to know all the production conditions fully and down to the last detail, it is essential to know the equipment of this production at its present level and it is essential to have a certain scientific education."<sup>7</sup> This is why it is so important to constantly add to one's knowledge in military affairs, to assimilate all recommendations of military science and improve one's professional skills in the art of troop control and command.

An important trait in the Leninist style of leadership is a close tie to the masses and the ability to have a constant and beneficial influence on one's subordinates. The person who relies only on himself and who divorces himself from others cannot achieve success in military affairs. V. I. Lenin taught that "a link with the masses...is the most important, the basic condition for success in any activity whatsoever...."<sup>8</sup>

The ties of a military leader with subordinate commanders and political workers presuppose a constant personal contact with them, mutual aid and unity in organizational and ideological work. V. I. Lenin was constantly concerned about the close and friendly work of the command and party cadres. In one of the telegrams to the Revolutionary-Military Council of the Eastern Front, he specially asked information about "whether you are working well with the new front commissar...."<sup>9</sup> Another example could also be given where V. I. Lenin again advises: "Rely on close work...."<sup>10</sup>

As an example of such work I would like to note the activities in 1942-1943 of the military council of the 60th Army with the following membership: commander Lt Gen I. D. Chernyakhovskiy, military council members Army Commissar 1st Rank F. F. Kuznetsov (up to 20 October 1942) and then Lt Gen A. I. Zaporozhets and from 9 July 1943 until the end of the war Maj Gen V. M. Olenin, and the second military council member Maj Gen V. I. Rodionov. They all had lengthy party membership, good training and experience in leadership work while the army commander in addition had combat experience gained in battles against the Nazi invaders. The military council discussed and decided a large number of questions including on the organization and conduct of combat, combat, operational, logistic, medical and technical support for the troops, the recruitment and placement of personnel, the training of the officers, staffs and troops, the manning of the units and formations, the strengthening of military discipline and order, increasing vigilance, decorations and much else. Questions were brought up before the military council as they arose and according to their importance. The army commander certainly played the leading role in discussing

and resolving all questions. All the remaining council members agreed with his analysis of the state of affairs in the army, his reasoning and conclusions. However, in the course of the discussion and in adopting a decision, Ivan Danilovich neither infringed on their rights, he showed understanding for their arguments and as much as possible considered their opinions in working out a decision and in implementing it. The council sessions were held not only at the staff and at the command post but also in the units and formations and once even, as I recall, at an army observation post.

One was also struck by the fact that in discussing questions no particular differences arose among the military council members. Everyone endeavored to take the most effective decision, to carry out the arising task in the best manner and fully. The successful activities of the military council were also aided by the fact that all its members respected the experience and high moral qualities of their comrades and valued their opinion. And hence the high level of teamwork which marked the activities of the 60th Army's military council.

In following the instructions of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) and the Main Political Directorate, the military council very carefully defined the tasks of party political work with the personnel considering the particular features of carrying out the combat tasks. It heard reports by the chiefs of the political bodies, it analyzed the state of affairs in indoctrinational work and adopted the corresponding decisions aimed at strengthening discipline and morale, increasing the steadfastness of the troops on the offensive and instilling offensive zeal. Again all the military council members took an active part in the actual carrying out of these tasks. The commander in assigning the combat missions without fail gave specific instructions on the organizing of party political work. In being in the troops, without fail he spoke with the secretaries of the party and Komsomol organizations in the regiments and battalions; he showed an interest in the combat deeds and mood of the men, how they were being fed, how supplies were for life in a war and suggested effective forms of indoctrinational work. I. D. Chernyakhovskiy was particularly fond of talking with the men in the trenches, on the forward edge, at artillery and mortar positions and in dugouts. He frequently visited the field hospitals and took an interest in whether the men were being treated and fed well, whether they were receiving newspapers and letters and being visited by their combat comrades. The other members of the military council proceeded in exactly the same manner.

The close work of the commander and the military council members and collective leadership are also inseparable from the personal responsibility of each worker for a certain work area. "In any event and under all circumstances without exception," V. I. Lenin taught, "collectivism should be accompanied by the most precise establishing of personal responsibility for each individual for a precisely determined question."<sup>11</sup>

*Collectivism in the work of a military chief presupposes relying on subordinates and on the party and Komsomol organizations as well as the greatest possible use of their experience. To rely on the collective, to maintain close contact with the men and to heed their advice does not mean to bring up the rear or be led about by subordinates. The military leader must always be a head above each of his subordinates both in terms of his commander training and by nature in order to*



have the full moral right to lead into battle thousands of men to possible death for the sake of victory over the enemy.

There is the notion that the higher the position held by a military leader, the more experienced he is and the richer and more diverse his training. In essence, this is the case and it always should be so. A senior chief is responsible not only for all his subordinate commanders and specialists but he must also instruct and indoctrinate them, whatever the positions they held and whatever the specific tasks they are carrying out. A military chief who on the level of the position held is capable of looking more broadly and further than his subordinates could be considered ideal in this regard. He is the first to see something new and raises each new problem promptly, in determining the specific goal and most effective methods of achieving it. Since there are no ideal people, and there are not even many merely gifted ones, each military leader must be concerned with developing the designated abilities and must try to cut at least a "new furrow" in military art, in outstripping one's subordinates in creative search. In other words, the men must be led in such a manner as to maximally develop their gifts and to teach them to take enterprising and independent steps, without fearing damage to one's own authority here. In life, incidentally, it does happen that if a leader is a thoughtful person who is constantly on the lookout and does not tolerate stagnation of thought, including among subordinates, his prestige is rather high.

The particular features of the work style of each military leader and the nature of his relationships with subordinates have many facets and shades which influence the results of practical work. For example, take the question of the manner of giving instructions to subordinates. These ordinarily are given as they are needed in carrying out the arising tasks. All instructions on any question should always be timely, purposeful, concrete, brief and clear. It is very wise to accompany them with recommendations on the most effective methods of carrying out the given task. Here in no instance should one give the executors many minor "routine" instructions and advice which could confuse them and which would restrict their initiative and independence.

Often superiors and subordinates search together for the ways and methods to carry out the most involved tasks. The more unusual the undertaking the harder the work and, as a rule, they reach the same conclusions. However, it also happens that the executors voice certain ideas which differ from how their superior thinks. The latter, without focusing attention on this or, to put it more simply, in ignoring the opinion of his subordinates, orders them to act as he feels necessary. But in the interests of the question it would be desirable to show to one's subordinates the unconditional correctness of one's decision so that they also would feel the given variation the best and would work on implementing it, in sparing no effort.

The problem is that the style of leadership and the results of the work of the executors are always reciprocally determined. If the subordinates never defend their opinions and always willingly agree with what their superior says, then it can be assumed that the latter has excessively usurped his rights. If the subordinates do not carry out his demands precisely and do much contrary to his instructions, then this means that their military chief either gives the tasks in a confusing manner or is not sufficiently exacting and does not bother with

supervising the execution. If subordinates act routinely and without creativity in exercises and drills, this means that their chief not only directs the training process poorly but in addition is himself not sufficiently trained as an educator. This line can be traced even further to emphasize the indisputable fact that the most characteristic qualities of a military leader and the style of his work are starkly reflected in the practical activities of his subordinates.

It often happens that a military chief issues instructions to executors in bypassing their immediate superiors (for example, the commander of a front goes to a divisional commander, an army commander to a regimental commander and so forth). It is correct to do this only in certain extraordinary circumstances when a particular task must be carried out without delay or help provided in an area where a particularly alarming situation has arisen. However, in any instance, one should proceed in this manner as rarely as possible, only as an exception in order not to take over for the corresponding commanders and not introduce confusion into troop control. The immediate superior of these subordinates should be immediately notified about the content of such instructions.

In the process of troop leadership, a military chief must constantly seek out new, more effective forms and methods for carrying out the basic tasks of military organizational development, for the practices of the operational, combat and political training of the personnel and for effectively employing the troops in combat and an operation. Marxist-Leninist theory and dialectical materialism serve as the theoretical basis for working out an effective leadership style. For this reason our party has always considered the ideological level of the cadres as the main condition for success in their practical activities. The CPSU and its Leninist Central Committee have set an example of scientific leadership over the activities of the masses and of a Leninist style in solving state problems. The approach to troop leadership on the part of each military leader should be just as scientific and creative.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> PRAVDA, 15 June 1983.

<sup>2</sup> K. K. Rokossovskiy, "Soldatskiy dolg" [A Soldier's Duty], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, pp 260-261.

<sup>3</sup> A. Sharipov, "Chernyakhovskiy," in the series "Zhizn' zamechatel'nykh lyudey" [The Life of Famous People], Moscow, Molodaya gvardiya, 1980, p 198.

<sup>4</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 326, inv. 5047, file 64, sheets 134-135.

<sup>5</sup> V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 53, p 68.

<sup>6</sup> A. Sharipov, op. cit., pp 185, 187, 189.

<sup>7</sup> V. I. Lenin, PSS, Vol 40, p 215.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., Vol 44, p 348.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., Vol 51, p 16.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., Vol 50, p 205.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., Vol 39, p 46.

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## WORLD WAR II: POLITICAL WORK IN LIFTING OF LENINGRAD BLOCKADE

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[Article by Lt Gen V. Nechayev, military council member and chief of the Political Directorate of the Order of Lenin Leningrad Military District: "Party Political Work During the Period of Preparing the 1944 Leningrad-Novgorod Operation (From the Experience of the Work of the Leningrad Front Political Bodies)"]

[Text] The offensive operation by the troops of the Leningrad (commander, Army Gen L. A. Govorov), Volkhov (commander, Army Gen K. A. Meretskov) and Second Baltic (commander, Col Gen M. M. Popov) Fronts in cooperation with the Red Banner Baltic Fleet (commander, Adm V. F. Tributs), the long-range aviation and partisans in January-February 1944 was the concluding stage in the battle for Leningrad.

In the course of the operation it was necessary to defeat the Army Group North, to completely relieve Leningrad, to clear the Nazi invaders out of the rayons of Leningrad Oblast and create the necessary conditions for liberating the Soviet Baltic republics. Here the basic efforts were focused in the areas of the Leningrad and Volkhov Fronts as these held an enveloping position in relation to the enemy grouping.

The Command of the Leningrad Front in accord with the overall concept of the operation, had planned to make two encounter attacks against the enemy on the general axis of Ropsha: from the Oranienbaum staging area with the forces of the 2d Attack Army and from an area to the south of Leningrad with the forces of the 42d Army. After linking up these should continue the offensive toward Narva and Luga. The 67th Army was confronted with the mission of tying down the enemy forces on the Mga sector by active operations and at the same time prepare an attack on Krasnogvardeysk in order, in cooperation with the 8th Army of the Volkhov Front, to surround and destroy the troops fighting against them.

The troops of the Leningrad Front had to break through a powerful, deeply echeloned enemy defense which had an extensive system of trenches and switch positions. The population points had been turned into centers of resistance by the Nazis. The railroad embankments, levees, canals and the industrial buildings had also been adapted for defenses.<sup>1</sup> The Nazi propaganda, calling the lines

along the banks of the Neva and Volkhov an "impassable northern rampart," persuaded the German soldiers that the defenses of the German Army around the walls of Leningrad were dependable and would make it possible to repel any offensive by the Soviet Army. The directive from the commander of the 18th German Army sent out to the troops in December 1943 demanded that each strong-point be defended and that the troops not retreat a step from the positions held. It emphasized that the liberating of Leningrad from the blockade "would always be one of the most important goals of the Bolsheviks...equal to the defense of Moscow or the battle for Stalingrad."<sup>2</sup>

The situation of the troops of the front was complicated by the fact that the winter of 1943-1944 had been mild, with frequent thaws. In the forests many soggy areas had formed which were impassable even for the infantry. The low clouds limited and at times completely excluded air operations. Moreover the personnel for a long time had been on the defensive and did not have sufficient experience in conducting extended offensive operations.

Under these conditions particular significance was assumed by the complete, early and careful training of the troops and the staffs as well as by the able organization of party political work. The military council, the political bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations were confronted with the task of making the troops aware of the experience gained during the period of the 1943 summer-autumn campaign on the other fronts and to subordinating all party political work in the course of preparing for the operation to the tasks of teaching the troops the art of breaking through a deeply echeloned enemy defense, conducting decisive and enterprising offensive operations to a great depth as well as maneuvering small subunits on wooded-swampy and lake-covered terrain.

The front's military council during the period of preparing for the operation confronted the commanders and political workers with the task of morally preparing the personnel for the offensive and developing high offensive spirit in the troops. The member of the front's military council, Lt Gen A. A. Zhdanov, pointed out that "it is essential to instill in the troops a fighting spirit so that the men under any circumstances carry out the combat mission and that they be ready to advance and move forward not just kilometers but rather tens and hundreds of kilometers.... In order to defeat the enemy it is essential...that the men fight without thinking about fatigue and not even allowing the notion of disengagement until the set mission has been fully carried out. It is essential that the men live for one idea, the one all-consuming desire to break and reduce the enemy to dust. The spiritual forces of the men should be capable of maximum effort not only at the outset of battle, for instance, in breaking through the enemy defenses but also over an extended period of fighting deep in the enemy defenses."<sup>3</sup>

All party political work was based upon the demands of the decrees of the party Central Committee, the orders and directives of the Supreme High Command and the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army, the commands of the fronts, armies and formations and the provisions of the report of the Chairman of the State Defense Committee on the 26th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and Order No 309 of 7 November 1943. The last documents pointed out that the time was not far off when Leningrad Oblast would be completely cleared

of Nazi invaders and the task was set of "boldly and decisively crushing the enemy defenses, pursuing the enemy night and day...destroying and capturing enemy personnel and equipment."<sup>4</sup>

The Political Directorate of the Leningrad Front (chief, Maj Gen D. I. Kholostov) had worked out a plan of party political measures and this outlined the content of party political work at each stage of the operation. In it great attention was given to work in the 2d Attack Army in line with its relocation to a maritime staging area and in the rear units and facilities which had much to do in order to set up and stockpile materiel for the forthcoming operation. It also focused the party political apparatus on carrying out measures aimed at keeping military secrets, observing vigilance and further strengthening military discipline and so forth.

Similar plans for party political work were worked out by the political sections of the armies, corps and divisions and this gave coordination and purposefulness to the activities of the political bodies and party organizations.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the plan of the 2d Attack Army (political section chief, Maj Gen F. A. Shamanin) provided ideological and political training for the officers, political measures for the personnel, training in the actual practice of party political work for the command personnel, the training of the party political apparatus and the party Komsomol aktiv, the establishing of a reserve of political workers, providing aid to the party political apparatus of the formations and units as well as the putting out of agitation and propaganda literature. Particular attention was paid to developing high offensive zeal in the personnel, to party-political support for the training of the assault groups and to indoctrinating courage, boldness and decisiveness in the soldiers, sergeants and officers.

Party political work during the preparatory period was aimed at making each man feel his own responsibility for the outcome of the pending battles. In organizing the political support in preparing for the operation, the military council, the political directorate, the political sections and the party political apparatus gave great attention to indoctrinating the officer personnel. "If an officer loses heart or loses his equilibrium," commented A. A. Zhdanov at one of the meetings, "he inevitably loses control over the troops and is unable to maintain high morale in his subordinates. The strength of a commander is in his strength of spirit and unbending will which nothing can break. The first duty of a commander and political worker is to prevent a decline in combat morale in the troops, regardless of the difficulties they may face."<sup>6</sup>

Work was carried out purposefully and effectively in training the command and political personnel for carrying out the pending missions in all the field forces and formations. For example, the political section of the 42d Army (chief, Col Gen N. I. Britvin) held a meeting for the chiefs of the divisional political sections and the deputy commanders for political affairs in the artillery and tank units as well as a seminar for the instructors of party organizational work. Here they discussed the questions of directing party political work in the forthcoming offensive battles and the experience was generalized in indoctrinating the party aktiv as well as the selecting and admission of the best fighters and commanders into the party. The political section recommended that the political bodies of the formations hold meetings on these questions

for the commanders of the rifle regiments and battalions as well as for their deputies for political affairs while the regiments would do the same for the company and platoon commanders.

At the beginning of January a conference was also held in the field force for the senior instructors for agitation and propaganda on the political sections of the corps as well as an instruction session for the divisional agitators and chiefs of clubs. The lecturers of the political section worked out and sent out to the troops lecture theses and materials for talks.

In organizing the work with the command and political personnel, it was considered that under the influence of the general successes of the Soviet Army in 1943, a certain portion of the officers might develop a false notion that the enemy would give up Leningrad and Novgorod without resistance and the Soviet troops would merely have to pursue the enemy. In line with this the political bodies had to do great work to overcome indifference, complacency and an underestimating of difficulties in the forthcoming operation. The eliminating of such attitudes was aided by the instructions of the Supreme High Command that the enemy, in feeling the approach of retribution for the crimes committed on our land, would fight with particular frenzy for each piece of captured territory.<sup>8</sup>

The front's military council drew particular attention of the political bodies to the fact that the men had been mobilized for able actions and that their bravery should be combined with skill and ability. Here the need was emphasized of increasing the responsibility of the personnel for the able use of all equipment and capabilities which our troops possessed for conducting a broad offensive.<sup>9</sup>

Party political work was organically merged with combat training. Under conditions close to actual combat the troops were taught the art of offensive combat. Special training areas were organized similar to enemy areas. The men were taught to cross strong fortifications, to assault and blow up pill-boxes as well as the skills of maneuvering including outflanking, envelopment and a rapid breaking through of the front. They made long marches with full gear through the forests and swamps, they laid brushwood roads, they blew up quarries and cut openings in the woods.

The agitators and propagandists in talks, reports and lectures told about the role of the Communist Party as the inspirer and organizer of the struggle of the Soviet people against the Nazi invaders and explained that the name of V. I. Lenin born by the city and the oblast increased the responsibility of the personnel for the operation's outcome. They showed the political and economic significance of Leningrad and the oblast for victory over the enemy.

The commanders, the political workers, the party and Komsomol activists in the work with the personnel utilized the experience gained in breaking through the blockade and they also sought out new forms and methods of work. Good initiative was shown by the political section of the 90th Red Banner Rifle Division (chief, Maj V. I. Aslamov). The formation drew up an appeal from participants in the breaking through of the blockade Lts V. Krasavin and G. Sapezhinskiy, MSgt M. Pitolin, Jr Sgt M. Korovnikov and Pfc V. Zhukov to the division's

personnel. "Combat friends," it stated. "A year ago the troops of the Leningrad and Volkhov Fronts carried out a historic mission, they broke the ring of the enemy blockade of Leningrad.... But the enemy is still at the walls of Leningrad...the Nazis shell it with artillery rounds and kill women and children in cold blood....

"Dear friends! More boldly into battle! Death to the fascist occupiers!"<sup>10</sup>

The appeal of the division's veterans was read at assemblies and meetings and published on the eve of the offensive in the formation's newspaper. The activists spoke about it also in conversations with the men. The appeal of the fellow servicemen to the sacred place met a warm response in the hearts of all the soldiers, sergeants and officers.

The initiative of the political section from the 90th Red Banner Rifle Division was picked up in other units and formations of the armies and the fronts.

In the units and subunits of the fronts, reports were given on the following subjects: "Duties of the Red Armyman in Combat," "The Infantry is Invincible If It Fully Utilizes the Power of Its Weapons," "In Advancing Keep Closer to the Fire Barrage of Our Artillery," "Friendship and a Helping Hand in Combat," and others. Particularly great attention was also given to preparing the young recruits for the forthcoming battles. Additional exercises and drills were conducted with them. Work with this category of servicemen was also reflected in the plans of the party and Komsomol organizations, of the deputy unit commanders and the political sections. The political section of the 128th Rifle Division (chief, Lt Col I. A. Semagin) held an interesting measure. Upon its initiative, a group of young soldiers headed by a participant in the lifting of the Leningrad blockade, Lt Yakovlev, made a ski trip through the sites of the historic battles in the course of which the officers showed the men the destroyed Nazi fortifications and told about the combat deeds of fellow servicemen. During a clash, Sr Sgt Sizykh and the Red Armyman Uspanov had broken through to the position of an enemy mortar crew. Having destroyed the enemy soldiers, they turned the mortar and fired at the fleeing Nazis.

Pointing to the piles of dirt and fragments of beams, Lt Yakovlev pointed out: "Here were the German pillboxes which impeded the advance of our infantry. Here is what is left. One such pillbox was blown up by the communist Andreyev who, in disdaining death, crawled up to it and threw a string of grenades into the opening."

At the final talk, the participants in the hike said that all they had seen instilled in their hearts faith in the strength of Soviet weapons and aroused a pride for the courageous actions of their fellow servicemen and a desire to act just as boldly and decisively.<sup>11</sup> Similar hikes for young soldiers soon thereafter were held in other formations and units of the front. Undoubtedly they helped in the development of the men who had just joined the military collectives.

Great attention was given to practical training for the party political apparatus and the party aktiv. At meetings held for the different level political workers, lectures were given on the forms and methods of work with the personnel

during the period of preparing for and conducting combat. The political bodies of the armies, corps, divisions and brigades held seminars for the agitators. This made it possible for the activists ahead of time to think out and determine the forms and methods for their work.

The effectiveness of the chosen forms and methods of party political work were tested out in tactical exercises and drills. The party political apparatus of the subunits was given the mission of organizing their work in the course of preparing for the operation in the same way that it would occur under combat conditions. The workers of the divisional political sections and the regimental political apparatus went into the field along with the subunits and on the spot taught the commanders, the political workers and the party aktiv to conduct political work during the forthcoming offensive battles.<sup>12</sup>

In organizing party political work for preparing for the offensive operation, the political bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations considered the circumstance that many soldiers of non-Russian nationality were serving in the units fighting around Leningrad. Thus, in the 2d Assault and 67th Armies, they comprised up to 20 percent of the men.<sup>13</sup> The political directorate of the front and the party political apparatus of the formations and units gave great attention to preparing them for the forthcoming battles. For these purposes they used the visit made by delegations from the Kirghiz, Tajik and Uzbek republics. In the units and formations, propagandists and agitators were prepared from among the soldiers and officers of non-Russian nationality. The political directorate published newspapers in the Tatar and Kazakh languages and also put out leaflets and posters. Seminars and instructional meetings were conducted with this category of activists.

Indoctrinational work with the soldiers of non-Russian nationality produced positive results. A predominant majority of them learned to skillfully use various types of weapons in combat.

The indoctrinating of hate for the Nazi occupiers was one of the tasks of party political work. For these purposes, the political workers and activists used information acquired by the Extraordinary State Commission for Establishing and Investigating Crimes of the Nazi Invaders, letters received by the men from liberated areas, materials of the front press and facts from the history of the blockade of heroic Leningrad.

By their moving and ardent words, the activists evoked hate for the enemy in the men. Thus, in the course of a conversation the agitator, Jr Sgt Kukushkin, stated: "The Nazis whom we will soon meet in battle are the murderers of the Leningraders and their hands are stained with the innocent blood of children and elderly. Let us catch the murderers and destroy them! Not a single Nazi should leave our land alive!"

The press also conducted active work to instill hate against the Nazi invaders. The total run of the 43 newspapers of the front exceeded 200,000 copies. From issue to issue their pages published materials showing the atrocities of the Nazis and calling for vengeance for everything perpetrated by the Nazi invaders. For example, the articles and letters published in the large-run newspaper ZASHCHITNIK RODINY such as "Monsters of Cruelty," "We Will Remember," "We Will



Not Forgive!" "The Hearts of the Soldiers are Full of Anger" and others gave the monstrous facts about the atrocities of the Nazi invaders in the cities and villages of Leningrad Oblast. Under the heading "Agitator, Read to the Soldier!" was published the article "Vengeance and Death to the Nazi Invaders!" It stated: "A severe sentence has long been signed for the enemy by our children, sisters, mothers and fathers. We should carry out this sentence. We will carry it out! Our judgment will be quick and merciless. Not a single bullet, not a single shell will miss its mark.... Our slogan is forward, to the complete defeat of the enemy."<sup>14</sup>

The front's periodical press provided aid to the commanders, the political workers, the party and Komsomol organizations in preparing the personnel for the forthcoming battles. The pages of the newspapers propagandized the experience of offensive actions and they systematically published materials describing party political work, the organizing of control of the subunits in combat, the significance of cooperation, the procedure and methods of attacking the heavily fortified enemy positions and so forth. The example was set by the front's newspaper NA STRAZHE RODINY. It regularly published materials on the combat training of the men being readied to lift the brigade, it urged them to improve their combat skills and to master the art of fighting an experienced enemy and disclosed shortcomings in the work of the commanders in the area of organizing combat. Its editorials "For the Sake of a Great City!" and "Let Us Multiply the Glory of the Soldiers of Leningrad" published in January 1944 as well as other materials urged the Leningrad soldiers to mercilessly defeat the enemy.

During the period of preparing for the operation, the units and formations were visited by workers from the city, oblast and rayon party committees, the soviets as well as delegations from plants and factories and the intelligentsia. In reports, talks and speeches at assemblies and meetings they described the heroic deeds of the city's workers and urged the soldiers, sergeants and officers to lift the blockade more quickly. Representatives of the troop units visited the enterprises of the city and oblast. Meetings with workers contributed to the development of offensive zeal in the men.

The Leningrad party organization sent its best cadres to the front and shared its rich experience in mass political work with the army party organizations and political bodies. Working in the political sections of the armies, corps and divisions were many former secretaries of the party and Komsomol gorkoms and raykoms and from the major primary party organizations of Leningrad and the oblast.

In preparing for the operation great attention was given to party organizational measures. In all the companies party and Komsomol organizations were set up and these averaged 15 and more communists and Komsomol members. Within the rifle subunits, the party and Komsomol forces were so allocated that there was at least one communist or Komsomol member in a squad or crew. In the divisions of the XXX Guards Rifle Corps (chief of the political section, Col N. M. Ivanov) prior to the offensive there were 2,200-2,300 communists and up to 1,800 Komsomol members. This made it possible to have several party members and Komsomol members in each squad and crew.<sup>15</sup> As a rule the commanders of the squads and crews, the number-one men of the medium machine guns, the gun and mortar gunners and the drivers of combat vehicles were communists and Komsomol members.

During the preparatory period the military councils and political bodies of the front devoted great attention to establishing a reserve of political personnel. As of 20 January 1944, the political directorate of the front had a reserve numbering 172 men. In addition, 124 political workers were assigned from the front's reserve to the operational reserves of the army political bodies.<sup>17</sup> For example, the political section of the 2d Assault Army prior to the offensive had a reserve of 53 political workers including 16 deputy battalion commanders for political affairs, 12 battalion party organizers and a number of other political personnel categories.<sup>18</sup>

The effective party political work contributed to the ideological growth of the soldiers, sergeants and officers. This can be seen from the applications to be admitted to the party and Komsomol. In October 1943, 3,470 persons were admitted as members of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)], in November the figure was 3,982 persons and in December 4,251. In addition, over these 3 months 12,243 persons became candidate party members.<sup>19</sup>

The influx of applications requesting admission to the party increased on the eve of the offensive. Just in the 63d Guards Rifle Division (chief of the political section, Lt Col K. I. D'yachenko) 2 days prior to the offensive over 630 requests to join the party and around 130 requests to join the Komsomol were received.<sup>20</sup>

In January 1944, the total number of communists in the party organizations of the Leningrad Front was 148,164 persons. The Komsomol organizations numbered 101,380 members.<sup>21</sup>

The political directorate of the front, the political sections of the armies, corps and divisions also did significant work among the enemy troops. Along with putting out leaflets (in 1943, the front's political directorate put out 163 leaflets including 38 appeal letters from German servicemen to their comrades), radio broadcasts telling about the successes of the Soviet Army on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War and urging the enemy soldiers and officers to lay down their arms, as well as other measures. Proper attention was paid to preparing special propagandists for working with the personnel of the Nazi troops in the course of the offensive.

Nor did the front's party political apparatus overlook the questions of immediately informing the personnel in the course of carrying out the forthcoming mission. In a majority of units these were worked out in exercises. For this the telephone and radio were employed. In the political sections officers were selected for generalizing information and for establishing contact with the staffs. Special exercises and drills were conducted with them.

On 11 January 1944, a session of the front's military council was held and this summed up the results of the operation's preparations. The commander of the front, Army Gen L. A. Govorov, set the time for the start of the offensive. An appeal was adopted from the military council to the men participating in the offensive around Leningrad, urging them to defeat the enemy and completely lift the blockade.<sup>22</sup>



Prior to the offensive party and Komsomol meetings were held in all the sub-units. As was pointed out in a briefing note by the chief of the front's political directorate, Maj Gen D. I. Kholostov, they were all devoted to the question of the vanguard role of the communists and Komsomol members in the battle for the city of Lenin.

During the night prior to the offensive, meetings were held in the units. In the regiments of the 90th Red Banner Rifle Division (commander, Col N. G. Lyashchenko) the personnel formed up under the colors. The regiment's commander kneeled and stated: "We vow vengeance for the wounds of Leningrad!" After him all the personnel of the regiment repeated the words of the vow and the men raised their weapons above their heads. Such meetings, as experience showed, helped to create a high offensive zeal in the personnel.<sup>23</sup>

The communists and Komsomol members of the Leningrad Front were highly aware of their duty to the party, the motherland and the Soviet people. On the night before the storming of the enemy defenses, many of them wrote notes which they inserted in their party and Komsomol cards. Here they expressed their most cherished feelings:

"My party! In going into battle, I want to say that I have been your loyal son and will remain such until my last breath. Should I meet death, I will meet it as a communist should. The cause of Lenin is stronger than death. This profound conviction has been instilled in me by life. I believe in our victory. I go into battle for the motherland, for the party's cause, for my home Leningrad and for the happy life of my family. I vow this, Red Armyman I. D. Gorshkov."

"In going into battle, I vow to fight as our Komsomol heroes have fought. I give my word to my people that I will fight until my eyes no longer see the enemy, until my hands can no longer hold a weapon. Glory is with us! Guards Pfc P. I. Grigor'yev."<sup>24</sup>

"The enthusiasm, desire and determination of the soldiers and officers to defeat the enemy no matter what the cost were so great that each of them rushed to be the first to attack," the commander of the 67th Army, Lt Gen V. P. Sviridov, recalled later.<sup>25</sup>

On 14 January 1944, the troops of the 2d Assault Army from the Oranienbaum staging area and on 15 January, the troops of the 42d Army from the Pulkov Hills, in crushing the strongly reinforced enemy defenses, pushed toward each other. In the morning of 20 January, the troops of both armies linked up in the area of Russko-Vysotskoye. Thus was the Petergof-Strelna grouping of Nazi troops surrounded and then destroyed. By the end of January 1944, the troops of the Leningrad Front had reached the line of the Luga River. The enemy had been thrown 60-100 km back from the walls of Leningrad. The party political work conducted during the preparatory period as well as in the course of the offensive operation played an enormous role in the successes of the front's troops.

The experience of party political work during the years of the Great Patriotic War is one of the sources for forming in today's defenders of the motherland a

communist ideology and high moral-combat qualities as well as for mobilizing the personnel to successfully carry out the tasks of strengthening the nation's defense capability.

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See: "Nepokorennyy Leningrad. Kratkiy ocherk istorii goroda v period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Unconquered Leningrad. A Brief Essay on the History of the City During the Period of the Great Patriotic War], Leningrad, Nauka, 1970, p 335.
- <sup>2</sup> Arkhiv shtaba LenVO [Archives of the Staff of the Leningrad Military District], folio 2, inv. 42784, file 19, sheets 8-9.
- <sup>3</sup> See: "Bitva za Leningrad" [The Battle for Leningrad], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1964, p 324.
- <sup>4</sup> PRAVDA, 7 November 1943.
- <sup>5</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 309, inv. 34411, file 6, sheets 21-22.
- <sup>6</sup> "Politicheskoye obespecheniye velikoy pobedy pod Leningrada" [Political Support for the Great Victory at Leningrad], Leningrad, Voenizdat, 1945, p 35.
- <sup>7</sup> TsAMO, folio 397, inv. 2962, file 155, sheets 1-5.
- <sup>8</sup> See: "Bitva za Leningrad," p 325.
- <sup>9</sup> See: "Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota v period bitvy za Leningrad (1941-1944 gg.)" [Party-Political Work During the Period of the Battle of Leningrad (1941-1944)], Leningrad, Izd. politicheskogo upravleniya ordena Lenina LenVO, 1969, p 38.
- <sup>10</sup> N. G. Lyashchenko, "Gody v shineli" [Years in a Greatcoat], Tashkent, Izd-vo literatury i iskusstva imeni Gafura Gulyama, 1982, pp 39-40.
- <sup>11</sup> See: "Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota..., " p 39.
- <sup>12</sup> TsAMO, folio 309, inv. 4092, file 31, sheet 108.
- <sup>13</sup> Arkhiv politupravleniya Leningradskogo voyennogo okruga [Archives of the Political Directorate of the Leningrad Military District], Vol 6, file 25, sheet 378.
- <sup>14</sup> ZASHCHITNIK RODINY, 29 November 1943.
- <sup>15</sup> TsAMO, folio 217, inv. 33882, file 9, sheet 100.
- <sup>16</sup> [Not in text]

<sup>17</sup>TsAMO, folio 217, inv. 1217, file 597, sheet 126.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., folio 309, inv. 4092, file 227, sheet 43.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., folio 32, inv. 41693, file 4, sheets 153-258.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., inv. 22152, file 31, sheet 24.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., folio 217, inv. 1217, file 562, sheet 128; file 570, sheet 126.

<sup>22</sup>"Ordena Lenina Leningradskiy voyennyi okrug. Istoricheskiy ocherk" [The Order of Lenin Leningrad Military District. Historical Essay], Leningrad, Lenizdat, 1968, p 354.

<sup>23</sup>"Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota...", p 42.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp 42-43.

<sup>25</sup>"V ognennom kol'tse" [In the Ring of Fire], Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1963, p 161.

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## WORLD WAR II: ORGANIZING OFFENSIVES ON WOODED SWAMPY TERRAIN

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 84 (signed to press 27 Dec 83) pp 31-37

[Article by Candidate of Military Sciences, Docent, Col (Ret) F. Utenkov:  
"Certain Particular Features of Organizing and Conducting Army-Level Offensive Operations in Wooded-Swampy Terrain"]

[Text] During the years of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet troops conducted a series of offensive operations in wooded-swampy terrain. In a brief journal article it is impossible to analyze all such operations. For this reason the basic features in their preparation and conduct will be examined from the example of the offensive operations by the 28th Army (commander, Lt Gen A. A. Luchinskiy) and the 65th Army (commander, Lt Gen P. I. Batov) of the First Belorussian Front in the Bobruysk Operation (June 1944) and the 59th Army (commander, Lt Gen I. T. Korovnikov) of the Volkhov Front in the Novgorod-Luga Operation (January-February 1944), as the most typical conducted under summer and winter conditions.

Wooded-swampy terrain is more advantageous to the defending side than to the advancing one. In using the particular features of this terrain, and it was up to 50 percent of the entire area in the zones of advance of the 65th and 28th Armies<sup>1</sup> and up to 80 percent in the zone of the 59th Army,<sup>2</sup> the enemy constructed its defenses in such a manner that a larger portion of its forward edge was behind water obstacles with marshy banks or behind swamps. This greatly impeded the approach of our troops to it and, consequently, the breaching of it.

Naturally, the enemy concentrated the greatest effort on holding areas of terrain accessible for an offensive and which permitted the free employment of all the branches of ground troops and ensured air operations. Limited forces were assigned to defend the swampy areas and here the defenses were organized along a broad front. In the zones of advance of the 65th and 28th Armies, the boundary areas of the armies were the areas of terrain which made it possible to most effectively employ all the branches of troops and aviation. The most important roads leading into the flank and rear of the Bobruysk enemy grouping from the south as well as to such important communications junctions as Glusk, Slutsk and Baranovich ran through them. In the zone of advance of the 59th Army, the enemy defenses were most strongly developed to the southwest of Spasskaya Polist, that is, opposite the Selishche staging area occupied by the army's troops on the Volkhov River.

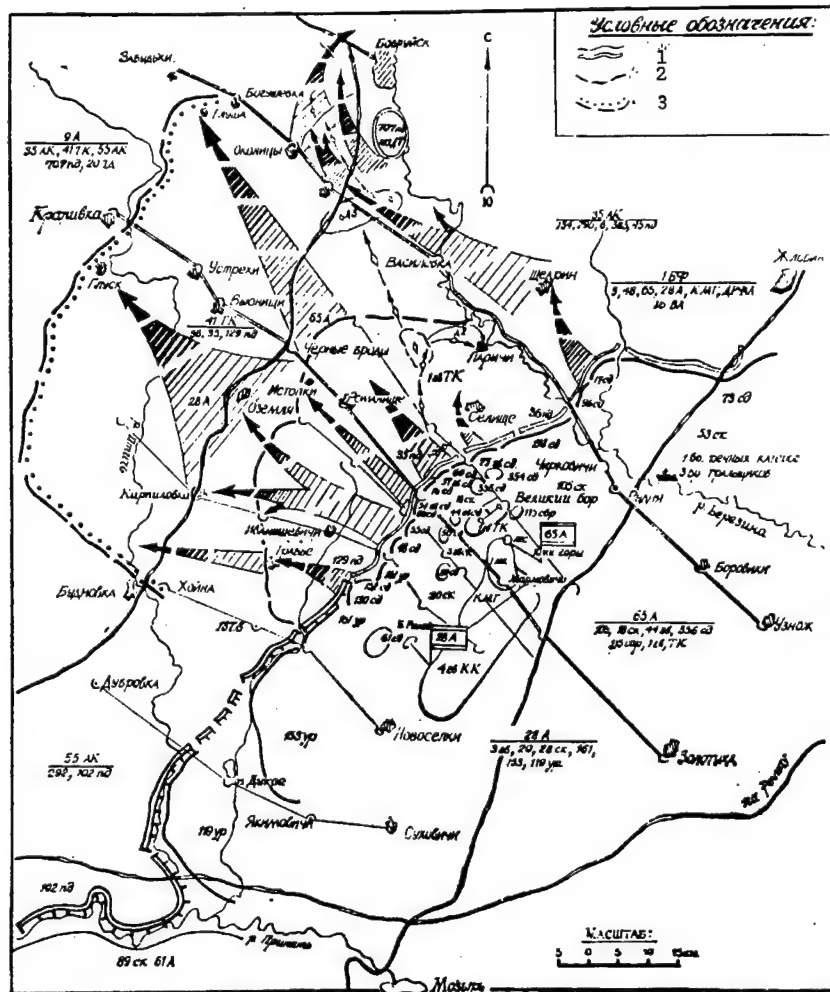


Diagram 1. Plans of the Commanders of the 65th and 22d Armies in the Bobruysk Operation

Key: 1--Initial position of troops;  
2--Mission by end of third day;  
3--Mission by end of ninth day.

Due to the complexity of the offensive across wooded-swampy terrain, great importance was given to preparing the operations. In order to maximally reduce the negative influence of the terrain on the forthcoming offensive, for an extended time the army troops trained on terrain similar to that across which they would have to advance. Command-staff exercises and run-throughs of the operations were carried out in sandboxes and miniature ranges.

Here particular attention was given to those armies which had not previously had to take the offensive under the conditions of wooded-swampy terrain. Thus, in preparing for the Bobruysk Operation, the playing through of the actions of the troops on the left wing of the First Belorussian Front was carried out in the 28th Army which previously had been fighting in the south.

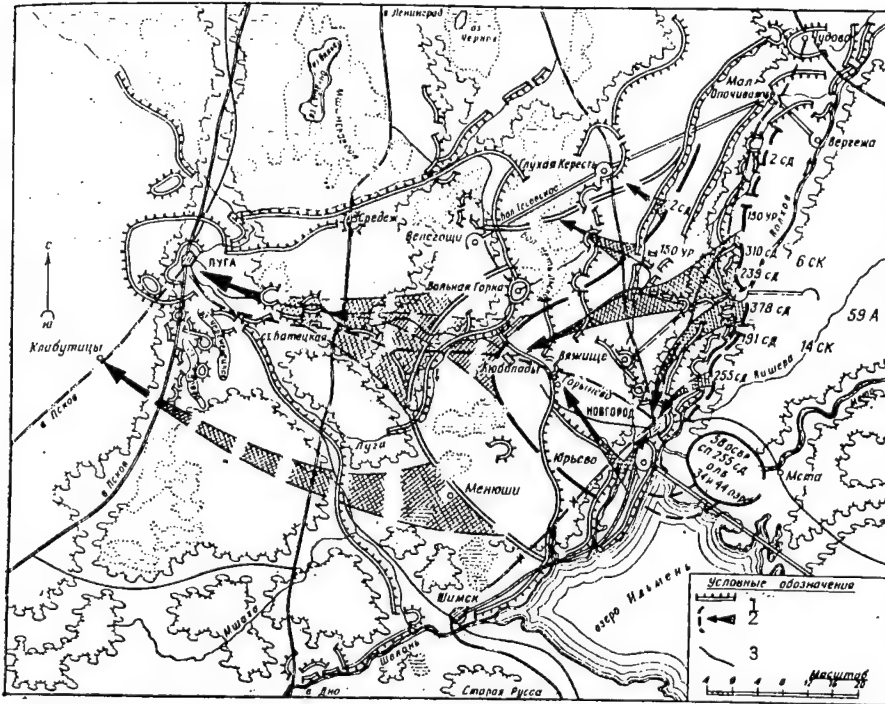


Diagram 2. Plan of the Commander of the 59th Army  
in the Novgorod-Luga Operation

Key: 1--Enemy lines;  
2--Combat missions of Soviet troops;  
3--Dirt roads.

The wooded-swampy terrain had a determining influence on selecting the sector of the main thrust. The presence of forested areas as well as the lack of roads represented a major obstacle for the advance of the troops, particularly for tank and artillery actions. For this reason the main thrust was made by the armies, as a rule, in the most accessible terrain. For example, in the Bobruysk Operation both the northern (the 3d and 48th Armies) and southern (65th and 28th Armies) assault groupings concentrated their basic efforts in the sectors where the enemy had the strongest defenses but the terrain conditions made it possible to employ all types of combat equipment. In the Novgorod-Luga Operation, the 59th Army made the main thrust from the Selishche staging area. Here the Nazi troops had been able to prepare a deeply echeloned defense but the terrain ensured fighting by all branches of troops and there was no need to cross a river. The specific conditions of the wooded-swampy terrain required a particular approach to settling the question of the number of attacks to be made by the army. As is known, after the directive instructions of Headquarters Supreme High Command [Hq SHC] of 10 January 1942 on actions by assault groupings, an all-arms army on the offensive usually made one attack. In the operations examined by us here, the armies made two attacks each and with great gaps between them. In the Bobruysk Operation, upon the decision of the commander of the 65th Army, the second (auxiliary) attack was made by the CV Rifle Corps in the sector of marker 139.1, Radin (5 km long) in the

direction of Selishche, Pesochneya Rudnya. The 28th Army made the second (auxiliary) attack in the sector of Mostki, Yurki (6 km long) with the forces of the CXXVIII Rifle Corps in the direction of Grabye (Diagram 1). In the Novgorod-Luga Operation, the 59th Army made the second (auxiliary) attack with the forces of a specially organized southern operational group consisting of the 58th Rifle Brigade, the 229th Rifle Regiment and a ski battalion from the 225th Rifle Division in a sector to the south of Novgorod (Diagram 2).

The wooded-swampy terrain and the related difficulties of the offensive influenced the depth of the operations and the rate of advance of the troops. The army operations under these conditions were planned, as a rule, to a shallower depth than under ordinary conditions and developed at a slower rate (see the Table).

Table

Planned Depth of Combat Missions and Rate of Advance for the Troops of the 65th, 28th and 59th Armies in the Bobruysk and Novgorod-Luga Operations

No.	Indicators of Operations	Armies		
		65th*	28th**	59th***
1	Depth of operation, km	65-75	to 55	to 120
2	Length of operation, days	9	9	not planned
3	Depth of combat tasks, km:			
	Near	50-60	25-30	to 30
	Subsequent	--	--	40-45
	Distant	65-75	45-55	to 120
4	Rate of advance, km:			
	First day of operation	9-15	6-8	3-6
	In tactical zone	16-20	5-6	4-6
	In operational depth	7-11	6-8	--

\* "Razгром nemetsko-fashistskikh voysk v Belorussii v 1944 gody" [Defeat of the Nazi Troops in Belorussia in 1944], Vol I, pp 297, 298.

\*\* Ibid.

\*\*\* "Novgorodsko-Luzhskaya operatsiya" [The Novgorod-Luga Operation], pp 79, 80.

The data given in the table indicate that under the conditions of a wooded-swampy terrain, army-level operations in a number of instances were planned to a depth of 55-75 km while the rate of advance did not exceed 5-8 km a day. These indicators are almost 2-fold less than the indicators for the scope of army-level operations conducted on medium-rugged terrain.

The conditions of the wooded-swampy terrain to a significant degree also determined the operational configuration of the armies. Thus, the 65th and 28th armies deployed all five rifle corps in the first echelon. The single-echelon

configuration of these armies was caused by a desire to make a strong initial attack so as to cross the enemy defenses as quickly as possible and ensure the commitment of the I Guards Tank Corps and the horse-mechanized group [KMG] into the breach for exploiting the success in the operational depth. In order to ensure a prompt increase in the efforts, the rifle corps and divisions operating in the sectors of the thrusts formed up their battle formations in two echelons while certain rifle regiments had a 3-echelon configuration. In addition, in each rifle corps there were strong forward detachments which were to cooperate with the mobile groups of the armies.

As for the 59th Army, it formed up its troops in two echelons. The depth of the configuration of its troops was increased by the 16th and 29th Tank Brigades which were to be committed to battle in the sector of the main attack. The two-echelon configuration of the army was explained by the significant depth of the missions and by the necessity of surrounding the Novgorod enemy grouping and firmly protecting the main assault grouping from possible counterattacks, particularly from the north.

The nature of the wooded-swampy terrain greatly restricted the view of the enemy defenses. From the ground command posts only the forward edge could be viewed and not in all sectors. For this reason many of the observation posts, primarily those of the formations, were located in trees and sometimes special towers were built for them.

The wooded-swampy terrain could not help but influence the organization of cooperation and control in the operations. In contrast to ordinary conditions, in the given operations significantly more points were established for organizing cooperation in the field, as the heavy woodedness reduced the possibility of viewing the terrain and installations in the enemy defenses from one or a limited number of posts. All command and observation posts, particularly on the tactical level, were brought as close as possible to the troops. Thus, in the 28th Army the observation posts of the divisional commanders were not more than 2 km away from the forward edge of the enemy defenses while the observation posts of the rifle regiment commanders were not more than 0.5-1 km away.<sup>3</sup>

The camouflaging properties of the terrain created great difficulties in studying the forward edge and the immediate depth of the enemy defenses. For carrying out this task in the armies an extensive network of observation posts was deployed and these were established on the ground and in trees. The capturing of prisoners and documents assumed particular importance. For example, in the 59th Army during just one month the scouts captured 22 men.<sup>4</sup> This made it possible to disclose the enemy grouping down to the regimental level and in the sectors of the pending attacks, down to the battalion.

For conducting reconnaissance in the course of the offensive in the 28th Army, for example, in addition to the TOE reconnaissance subunits, in each rifle company they temporarily established a foot reconnaissance squad and in a rifle battalion there was a platoon; in the divisional reconnaissance companies for conducting reconnaissance in the immediate enemy rear or for carrying out particularly important missions there were groups of deep scouts of 10-12 men in each.<sup>5</sup>



The offensive on wooded-swampy terrain dictated certain particular demands on the combat employment of artillery. The presence of forests made it possible to covertly concentrate the artillery in the shallow rear. At the same time, the positioning of a large number of artillery and mortars both in the jump-off areas and at firing positions was extremely complex. In the course of the offensive the artillery often fell behind the advancing troops. Numerous difficulties arose in correcting in firing from indirect fire positions, observation was limited and this reduced the effectiveness of fire. For this reason in breaking through the enemy defenses and in the course of the further offensive, infantry support weapons were widely employed. For example, in the III and XX Guards Rifle Corps of the 28th Army, on 1 km of breakthrough front there were from 26 to 30 and more weapons,<sup>6</sup> and in the 59th Army, around 18 support weapons of various calibers.<sup>7</sup> The assigning of such a number of support weapons and the turning them over to the commanders of rifle companies and battalions increased the fire power of these subunits and gave them great independence.

In wooded-swampy terrain significant difficulties arose in the employment of tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mount] which could operate, as a rule, only as small groups or subunits (platoon, company or battalion) and basically along roads. In the aim of providing them effective support and ensuring closer cooperation with the infantry, the basic mass of tanks was usually attached to rifle companies, battalions and regiments. Thus, in the 59th Army the tank breakthrough regiments, the flamethrower tank battalions and a self-propelled artillery regiment were attached to the first echelon rifle divisions and were used as infantry support tanks. The tank brigades were assigned to exploit the success in depth.<sup>8</sup> The 16th Tank Brigade with a self-propelled artillery regiment, one rifle regiment, one artillery battalion and a company of combat engineers comprised the mobile detachment of a corps and this was to be committed to battle after the rifle divisions had crossed the Pitba River with swampy banks with the mission of exploiting the success of the corps in the interests of the rapid surrounding of the Novgorod enemy grouping while the 29th Tank Brigade was put under the 65th Rifle Division which comprised the second echelon of this same corps.

In the course of the offensive on inaccessible areas of the terrain, the infantry operated ahead of the tanks while the tanks and SAU were employed for supporting the latter by firing from a halt before the infantry emerged from the defiles between the swamps. In operations in sectors where the enemy had created strong antitank defenses and employed ambushes, the tanks and SAU carried parties of submachine gunners. For making passages and rebuilding roads and bridges the tank units were reinforced by subunits of engineer troops. Each tank carried fascines, beams and devices for crossing antitank ditches. Assigned to the tank subunits and units were representatives from the supporting artillery with the task of controlling artillery fire directly from the tanks. In the I Guards Tank Corp and the KMG there were also representatives from the 16th Air Army.

Engineer support for the offensive operation on the wooded-swampy terrain demanded carrying out a large amount of complex work. For this reason, the army was reinforced by a significant number of engineer facilities. Thus, the 28th Army was reinforced with 7 engineer and field engineer battalions and 5 road

engineer battalions<sup>9</sup> while the 59th Army received 15 engineer and combat engineer battalions and 7 road building battalions.<sup>10</sup>

In the army troops much work was done for engineer support of the offensive. For example, in the 28th Army they prepared 5,600 m<sup>2</sup> of corduroy road and 7,400 m<sup>2</sup> of brush road surface. For crossing swampy areas of the terrain the army troops made 1,144 brush mats, 19,294 treads (for personnel), more than 230 ski sleds for moving medium machine guns and around 400 ski sleds for moving the support guns.<sup>11</sup> The 59th Army dug new trenches and built in swampy areas more than 20 km of earth and wood fences, they cleared the snow out of 80 km of old trenches and made 60,000 fascines and a large number of planks for road construction. In addition, 36 bridges were rebuilt and built and 2,400 brush mats were made for crossing wire obstacles.<sup>12</sup>

The organization of logistics also had its particular features. Due to the difficulties of transport and the lack of motor transport in the armies, materiel was basically delivered directly to the troops and stored on the ground in the jump-off areas for the offensive as well as at the artillery firing positions. The rear units and facilities were brought closer to the front line. For example, in the 65th and 28th Armies, the army depots were located 40-50 km from the forward edge while the railheads were 10-20 km away. In the 59th Army, fuel supplies were concentrated 7-25 km from the first echelon units of the divisions.<sup>13</sup> This provided an opportunity in the course of the offensive to quickly deliver the required materiel to the troops.

The conditions of the wooded-swampy terrain also had a definite influence on the conduct of combat. A significant number of the enemy firing positions from among those located in swampy areas of the defensive were not destroyed although they were in the range of our artillery's shells. The shells embedded deeply in the swampy soil and as a consequence of this their effective range was reduced.

Along with the swampy terrain, during the attack on the forward edge of the enemy defenses, the troops had great difficulties with the mixed minefields and wire obstacles which impeded the rapid rush of the infantry and the moving up of combat equipment. Success came only to those subunits and units which employed bold envelopments of the prepared areas and came out on the flanks and rear of the defending enemy groupings. However, because of the terrain conditions such forms of maneuver could be carried out basically by subunits consisting of a company, a battalion or more rarely a regiment.

An offensive through the forests was fraught with great losses from the exploding of shells and bombs not so much on the ground as in the air in striking the crowns of the trees.

In a majority of instances the artillery and tanks were able to support the infantry in an advance along roads and on accessible areas of the terrain. Under these conditions the fight for the roads assumed important significance. In the fight for the roads and for limiting the enemy's opportunity to destroy them or build obstacles on them in retreating, an important role was assigned to the special detachments sent out for this purpose into the enemy rear as well as to the aviation which should attack the retreating enemy troops and

thwart its measures to destroy the roads and bridges on the routes of the advancing troops.

Thus, the experience of preparing and carrying out an offensive on wooded-swampy terrain showed that enormous forested areas, extensive swamps, numerous lakes, rivers and streams as well as a poorly developed road network impeded the movement and maneuvering of the troops, it restricted their actions to the basic roads, it made the problem of logistical support complex, it imposed increased demands on the engineer support for the operations and greatly complicated the combat employment of the artillery, tanks and aviation.

The experience of organizing and conducting army-level offensive operations in wooded-swampy terrain, as gained by our troops in the last war, is very instructive. The creative generalization of this experience is of important significance and much of it can be used in troop training under present-day conditions.

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 382, inv. 8165, file 144, sheet 22.
- <sup>2</sup> I. T. Korovnikov, "Novgorodsko-Luzhskaya operatsiya" [The Novgorod-Luga Operation], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1960, p 15.
- <sup>3</sup> TsAMO, folio 382, inv. 8465, file 123, sheet 8.
- <sup>4</sup> I. T. Korovnikov, op. cit., p 49.
- <sup>5</sup> TsAMO, folio 382, inv. 8465, file 123, sheet 6.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., inv. 13537, file 5, sheet 47.
- <sup>7</sup> I. T. Korovnikov, op. cit., p 51.
- <sup>8</sup> I. P. Barbashin, et al., "Bitva za Leningrad 1941-1944" [The Battle for Leningrad of 1941-1944], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1964, p 315.
- <sup>9</sup> TsAMO, folio 382, inv. 13537, file 3, sheets 369, 370.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., folio 416, inv. 10447, file 146, sheet 2.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., folio 382, inv. 132294, file 6, sheet 8.
- <sup>12</sup> "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945" [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Vol 3, Moscow, Voenizdat, 1958, p 54.
- <sup>13</sup> I. T. Korovnikov, op. cit., p 165.

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## WORLD WAR II ORGANIZATION OF PARTISAN UNITS EXAMINED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 84 (signed to press 27 Dec 83) pp 38-46

[Article by Doctor of Historical Sciences, Maj Gen V. Andrianov: "The Organizational Structure of Partisan Formations During the War Years"]

[Text] During the years of the Great Patriotic War, an armed struggle in the enemy rear was waged by the partisan formations, underground organizations as well as by Soviet troop subunits and units which had both been specially trained for operating in the enemy rear as well as those ending up here out of the force of circumstances.

In contrast to the regular troops, the partisan formations did not have permanent supply depots which systematically ensured an influx of necessary materiel. Their combat activities were carried out on enemy-controlled territory. The basic contingent for forming the partisan groups and detachments was chiefly civilians who voluntarily (many of them for the first time) took up arms. For this reason, in the initial stage of combat the level of the combat training of a majority of the partisans was low and many of them gained military knowledge and skills only in the course of combat.

In considering that the enemy always surpassed the partisans in weapons it was not advantageous for them to engage the enemy in extended open battles. In their actions they relied chiefly on surprise attacks (raids, ambushes) which usually had a brief nature. The partisans resorted to various ways of causing the enemy losses in personnel as well as material losses without armed clashes.

Naturally, this had a direct impact on the organizational structure of the partisan formations. Here the establishing of them in various regions of the nation had its particular features. Where the detachments (groups) were organized by the local party and soviet bodies ahead of time, prior to the enemy's occupation of a certain rayon (oblast), their formation was carried out in parallel with the instructing of the partisans in special partisan schools. After receiving their mission, the detachments were left in the assigned areas until these areas were captured by the enemy or they were moved into the enemy rear. In a number of instances partisan formations were organized from servicemen and Chekists [members of the secret police]. Thus, in Kiev, in July-August 1941, two partisan regiments were organized numbering 2,296 men. These consisted predominantly of border troops and operations workers from the staffs

of the NKVD [People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs] from the western oblasts of the Ukraine. Regiments were soon shifted into the enemy rear and operated in the areas of Novgorod-Volynskiy, Korsun, Kiev and Cherkassy, making raids against the enemy rear, destroying Nazi lines of communications and routing their garrisons.<sup>1</sup>

In 1941-1944, special-purpose groups were also fighting in the enemy rear along with the partisan formations. These special groups had been sent there through the line of command of the Soviet Army and the state security bodies. After arriving in the designated area, these groups quickly were filled out with local patriots and, in essence, became partisan detachments and even brigades. This significantly broadened their reconnaissance and combat capabilities, making it possible to more effectively carry out special assignments in the interests of the Center.

During the first period of the war, the partisan detachments often received hunter battalions which were organized in the frontline areas for destroying spies and saboteurs dropped in by the enemy; there we also sabotage groups which were underground. For example, the group of K. S. Zaslonov which operated in November 1941-February 1942 at the Orsha rail junction, with the threat of defeat, went over to open partisan fighting and soon developed into a brigade.

Also widely practiced, particularly during the first period of the war, was the dropping into the enemy rear of organizer groups on the basis of which partisan detachments and even large formations were organized. Such groups usually numbered from 10 to 25 men (a commander, a commissar, a deputy commander for reconnaissance, a radio operator, a medical worker, an instructor in demolition work and several soldiers). The organizer groups played a particularly important role in the western regions of the nation where, as a consequence of the surprise enemy attack and its rapid advance deep into Soviet territory, the local party bodies had not yet been able to carry out the necessary work to establish a partisan movement.

Partisan formations were organized directly in the enemy rear by underground party organizations, by servicemen who had been encircled as well as by individual Soviet patriots. Here the process of manning the detachments, their weapons and training and the establishing of supply depots was carried out in a situation of the fiercest repression and atrocities by the occupiers and the lack of the necessary military equipment for fighting as well as personnel familiar with the tactics of partisan actions.

The structure of the partisan formations was exceptionally diverse. Usually this was influenced by several factors simultaneously: military, political, economic or of another sort.

Weapons played an extremely important role. This can be judged from the following. Thus, during the years of the Civil War there was not a substantial difference in the weapons of the partisans and the regular troops. Both had the same weapons (machine guns, rifles, grenades and blades). The enemy had superiority over the partisans only in artillery. There were very few tanks and aircraft and they were unable to substantially influence the methods of

combat. The wire telephone was the basic means of communications for the regular troops and this the partisans could easily disrupt. The partisan detachments had the same mobility as the enemy regular troops which at that time did not have a sufficient number of motor vehicles. All of this made it possible, along with the numerically small partisan detachments, to organize, wherever possible, large parts even up to armies which could attack large enemy forces and conduct extended open battles with them.

The situation was different during the years of the Great Patriotic War. The partisans, as a rule, were armed with small arms. The Nazis widely used tanks and artillery on mechanical traction in fighting them. The presence of aviation made it easier for the enemy to reconnoiter the positions of the partisan detachments and gave it an opportunity to make strong air strikes. Radio had become the basic means of communications and it was almost impossible for the partisans to disrupt this. This made it possible for the enemy command to effectively lead the punitive operations against them. During this war, the Nazis possessed much greater mobility in comparison with the partisans who were unable to widely employ motor transport for maneuvering.

Under the altered circumstances, the Communist Party introduced new effective methods of combat into the practices of partisan struggle and it constantly improved the organizational structure of the partisan forces. At the same time adjustments were made aimed against the attempts of establishing cumbersome, large partisan formations on the spot.

The party gave great attention to supplying the partisans with weapons which would make it possible to destroy enemy personnel and equipment without engaging it directly in armed clashes. Among this equipment, a particular place was held by special demolition equipment. Its use provided an opportunity for even small partisan groups to carry out major combat missions and cause the enemy significant harm. Here one act of sabotage (for example, the wrecking of a troop train) could cause a greater effect than the combat of a partisan formation with a large enemy unit. In many partisan formations special sabotage subunits were organized.

An essential factor influencing the forms of organization and the methods of the partisan struggle were the physico-geographic conditions. The vast forests and swamps, the vegetation-covered mountains limited the enemy's use of combat equipment and at the same time created favorable conditions for the basing and combat activities of the partisans. Both small as well as large partisan formations operated successfully on such terrain. As for the steppe areas, there large partisan formations could fight the enemy only by making raids. Only small detachments and groups engaged chiefly in sabotage and reconnaissance operated constantly in these areas.

The influence of the economic factor and population density on the specific features of the partisan struggle can be traced from the example of partisan operations in Karelia. The basic mass of the population in the occupied areas of this republic had been evacuated and of the remaining local inhabitants a majority had been dispatched by the invaders to concentration camps or had been driven off to forced labor in Finland. As a result, the partisan detachments were unable to obtain material aid on the spot as well as replenish their ranks



from local inhabitants. For this reason, the Karelian partisans were based close to the front line on Soviet territory not occupied by the enemy and from here periodically made raids into the enemy rear. The organizational structure of the Karelian partisan formations, due to the tactics of raid operations, was adapted to carrying out missions under these complex specific conditions. Basically operating there were mobile detachments numbering 50-150 men.

In areas close to the front line, where the enemy troop density was particularly high, the conditions for the basing and combat activities of the partisans were extremely difficult. For this reason, here, as a rule, small detachments and groups operated. In conducting reconnaissance and sabotage, they avoided direct clashes with the enemy.

The political situation in the enemy-occupied areas substantially influenced the development of the partisan struggle. The moral and political unity of the Soviet people remaining on the occupied territory and their wholehearted loyalty ensured exceptionally favorable conditions for partisans. However, in certain Western areas, where Soviet power had existed for a comparatively short period of time, the invaders had a social support in the form of the remnants of the exploiting classes and these, particularly at the outset of the war, had a definite influence on certain strata of the local population. Here the bourgeois nationalists and their organizations were outright agents for the occupiers. In these areas, only underground organizations and small partisan groups and detachments operated constantly. Large partisan formations could not be based here for a long time and for this reason fought in the course of raids.

The underground partisan bodies, in being concerned with the questions of the organizational development of the partisan formations, considered the aggregate of all the objective factors influencing the partisan struggle and relied on the constantly growing practice of the partisan movement. Here they were guided by the instructions of V. I. Lenin on the conduct of partisan warfare as formulated by him during the years of the first Russian revolution. In the article "The Prorogation of the Duma and the Tasks of the Proletariat," V. I. Lenin emphasized that partisan warfare requires simplicity in the organizing of detachments. They should possess a maximum of mobility and flexibility.<sup>2</sup>

The ability to move about rapidly and covertly, to make surprise attacks against the enemy, to quickly concentrate forces and assemble them at a certain place by a certain moment and the ability to operate for an extended time in small groups over an extensive territory--these and other demands of partisan warfare tactics guided the party bodies in the organizational development of the partisan formations.

The optimum solution was not achieved immediately. At the outset of the war, when there still was no experience, in organizing the partisan formations there was an element of spontaneity. The people's avengers, in rising to struggle against the enemy, joined together in groups, detachments, battalions and regiments of varying size. During the first wartime winter many of the larger formations (regiments and battalions) numbering up to several hundred men split up into individual detachments and groups. The detachment form for organizing the partisan forces was established in all the occupied regions. The detachment became the most typical form and the basic organizational unit.



The size of the detachments usually was several-score men. With the upswing in the partisan movement, the number of detachments and their size began to grow. In 1942, many detachments already numbered 150-200 and more partisans.

The detachment form of organizing the partisan forces proved fully effective. The actions of a majority of the partisan groups and detachments over vast territories to a significant degree deprived the enemy of its advantages. On rugged forested-swampy terrain the enemy was unable to effectively employ artillery, tanks and aviation against them and it was difficult to detect and pursue the partisans who had a good knowledge of their areas and were supported by the population. The mobile partisan detachments could attack the enemy by surprise, they could promptly disengage or refuse battle.

However, it was difficult to control a large number of isolated partisan detachments and groups and it was very hard to coordinate their actions even in carrying out simple missions, let alone conducting large operations according to a single plan. For this reason, with the increased scope of the partisan movement large formations began appearing and bearing different names including brigade, formation and division. The most typical was the formation of individual partisan detachments into brigades.

During the war years attempts were made to establish larger partisan formations. Thus, at the end of August 1942, the Kalinin staff of the partisan movement combined 7 partisan brigades and 3 separate detachments operating on the territory of Kalinin Oblast into the I Kalinin Partisan Corps (commander, Capt V. V. Razumov, commissar, Btlm Commissar A. I. Shtrakhov and chief of staff, Maj I. I. Veselov).<sup>3</sup> In September, the corps began raiding the enemy rear and soon thereafter, in October of the same year, after carrying out the set missions was broken up.

The experience of the combat showed that even under the conditions of the extensive wooded-swampy areas of Kalinin Oblast, the organizing of such a large partisan formation was not effective. In the course of a raid, the brigades and detachments of the corps often acted virtually independently and came together only periodically to conduct major operations. Significant difficulties also arose with the logistical support for the corps. Moreover, the concentrating of large partisan forces in one area made it easier for the occupiers to conduct reconnaissance and combat against the partisans.

The adopting of a troop structure by the partisan formations did not mean, however, that they were organized precisely according to its type and model.

The process of consolidating the partisan detachments into brigades occurred particularly rapidly starting in mid-1942. Thus, in the summer of 1942, in the northwestern and southern rayons of Leningrad Oblast, along with a large number of separate detachments, 6 partisan brigades were already operating.<sup>4</sup> In Kalinin Oblast, in June-August 1942, virtually all the detachments had been unified in 8 partisan brigades.<sup>5</sup> Formations of varying types were organized in Smolensk and Orel Oblasts, in the Ukraine, Belorussia and the Crimea. By the end of 1942 and the first half of 1943, in the areas of the concentration of significant partisan forces their basic mass had been amalgamated into larger formations consisting of several detachments. In Belorussia, the Crimea,

Leningrad, Kalinin, Smolensk and Orel Oblasts such formations were called brigades and in the Ukraine (here the brigade organizational structure was absent) they were called formations.

The rise of large and mobile formations capable of making strong attacks against the enemy and conducting large-scale operations was proof of the increased combat strength of the partisan movement. This opened up broad prospects for further increasing the attacks against the Nazi invaders.

In 1943, the underground party bodies of Belorussia divided the partisan forces into areas. Certain administrative areas were assigned to brigades. The brigades and separate detachments operating within several adjacent rayons or an oblast were combined into larger organizations called formations. Three large partisan formations were set up at the end of 1943 in the Crimea. Initially, these consisted of 7 and then 13 brigades.<sup>6</sup>

It must be pointed out that the consolidating of the partisan formations did not deprive them of the advantages inherent to brigades and detachments, since the partisan detachment remained, as a rule, the basic organizational unit. Ordinarily in different rayons (separately). When the need arose, they came together and operated under the direct leadership of the formation's command, making concentrated strikes against enemy objectives according to a single plan and with a change in the situation rapidly dispersed. Due to such fluid tactics, the occupiers in combating the partisans were unable to employ their superiority in men and weapons.

The partisan formations consisted of regional (local) formations and formations not related to certain combat areas. The regional detachments and formations were constantly based in the same areas. In the course of battles against the invaders they often had to change their bases and maneuver, but in all instances they gravitated toward their former places. The formations not tied to permanent base areas (nonregional), made extended raids. They fought the Nazi invaders in different areas, without remaining an extended time in them. The actions of such formations became widespread, for example, in the Ukraine, particularly in the central and southern rayons of the republic where there was not enough natural shelter.

The rich experience in raiding on unfamiliar terrain was a very valuable quality of the nonregional formations. Precisely due to this experience many Soviet partisan formations and detachments in 1944, in crossing the USSR state frontier, operated successfully in neighboring countries, providing aid to the local antifascist forces in fighting the occupiers.

In directing the partisan movement, the Communist Party put into practice the most effective forms of organizing the partisan forces corresponding to the most effective methods of combat. The party bodies approached the setting of the forms for organizing the partisan forces in a creative way, not allowing routine, in being guided by the interests of the most effective carrying out of the tasks at each stage of the war and considering here the concrete conditions of the terrain and the operational situation.

The ability to rapidly convert to new forms of organizing the partisan forces in line with a change in the situation was demonstrated, for example, by the Moldavian partisans. As a result of the rapid advance of the Soviet Army in the spring of 1944, two large Moldavian partisan formations under the command of V. A. Andreyev and Ya. P. Shkryabach which had fought in the Ukraine were in enemy-liberated territory. Their attempts to break across the frontline into Moldavia were unsuccessful. Because of this, the Central Committee of the Moldavian Communist Party (Bolshevik) adopted a decision to break up the formations and create new partisan detachments with 20-30 of the former fighters in each. At the end of July and the beginning of August 1944, six such detachments were air transported behind the front line into Kishinevskiy, Bender-skiy and Kagulskiy Rayons where they were joined by recruits from the local population and initiated active combat operations.<sup>7</sup>

Regardless of the great diversity in the organization of the partisan detachments and formations, there was much that was similar in their structure. They were headed by commanders and commissars. The formations and detachments had staffs, deputy commanders for subversion and reconnaissance as well as assistant commanders for supply (the rear services). Under the staffs were the signals subunits (companies, platoons or groups with radio centers) and the staff or headquarters platoons while under the deputy commanders for sabotage and reconnaissance were, respectively, the sabotage and reconnaissance platoons (and also companies at times in formations). Many formations and separate large detachments had their own hospitals, shops for repairing weapons and various equipment as well as field supply platoons.

All the detachments had party and Komsomol organizations, while the large formations, particularly the raiding ones, also had political sections. Direct leadership over the work of the party organizations and political bodies and formations was provided by commissars who had great trust and broad powers. They remained in the partisan formations after the institution of commissars had been abolished in the Soviet Army. Being representatives of the Communist Party in the partisan ranks, the commissars actually carried out the party line. They not only headed party political work in the detachments and formations but also took an active part in working out the plans and conducting combat operations. The commissars on equal footing with the commanders were responsible for carrying out the combat missions and for all types of support for the activities of the partisan formations, achieving high combat activeness and discipline among the partisans.

A formation (brigade) usually consisted of several (3-7 and more) detachments (battalions), while the detachments were made up of several companies, platoons or combat groups depending upon their size. Many formations included cavalry subunits and heavy weapons subunits such as artillery, mortar and machine gun platoons, companies and batteries (battalions). Below, in the diagram, we have shown the organization of the Chernigov-Volynskiy Partisan Formation (commander, Twice Hero of the Soviet Union and First Secretary of the Chernigov Obkom of the KP(b)U [Ukrainian Communist Party (Bolshevik)], A. F. Fedorov and the commissar, Hero of the Soviet Union and Second Secretary of the Chernigov Obkom of the KP(b)U, V. N. Druzhinin). Each detachment (battalion) in the formation consisted of three companies.

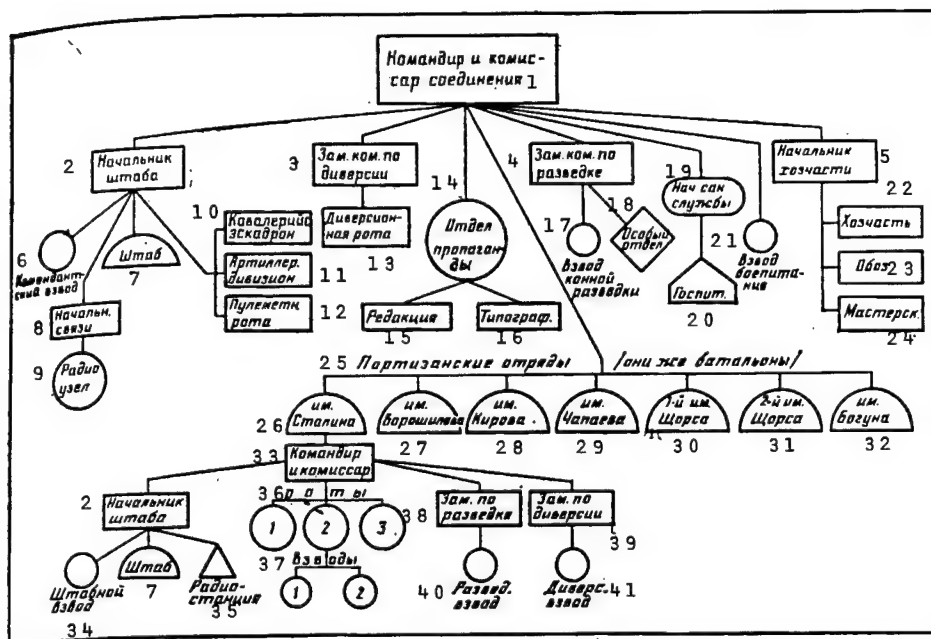


Diagram of Organization of Chernigov-Volynskiy Partisan Formation

Key: 1--Formation commander and commissar; 2--Chief of staff; 3--Deputy commander for sabotage; 4--Deputy commander for reconnaissance; 5--Chief of administrative unit; 6--Commandant platoon; 7--Staff; 8--Signals chief; 9--Radio center; 10--Cavalry squadron; 11--Artillery battalion; 12--Machine gun company; 13--Sabotage company; 14--Propaganda section; 15--Editorial staff; 16--Print shop; 17--Cavalry reconnaissance patrol; 18--Special section; 19--Chief of medical service; 20--Hospital; 21--Field supply platoon; 22--Administrative unit; 23--Transport; 24--Shops; 25--Partisan detachments (they are all battalions); 26--imeni Stalin; 27--imeni Voroshilov; 28--imeni Kirov; 29--imeni Chapayev; 30--First imeni Shchors; 31--Second imeni Shchors; 32--imeni Bogun; 33--Commander and commissar; 34--Headquarters platoon; 35--Radio set; 36--Companies; 37--Platoons; 38--Deputy for reconnaissance; 39--Deputy for sabotage; 40--Reconnaissance platoon; 41--Sabotage platoon.

The size of the brigades was not constant and varied as an average from several hundred to 3,000-4,000 and more men. Thus, the 5th Leningrad Brigade which was under the command of Hero of the Soviet Union K. D. Karitskiy in January 1944 numbered more than 5,000 partisans.<sup>8</sup>

The weapons of the partisan formations were marked by great diversity. In the subunits comprising the basis of the detachments there was a predominance of light weapons including submachine guns, automatics, rifles, carbines and grenades. There was a typical desire to have as many automatic weapons and grenades as possible. These weapons did not impede maneuvering, they met the requirements of rapid, close combat and created a high fire density. Particularly valued were the mixed minefield weapons with which the partisans waged an effective struggle against the enemy without coming into combat contact with it.

With an increase in the scale of the war in the enemy's rear, the organizational structure of the partisan formations was constantly improved. The desire of the partisans for a regular troop organization became evermore apparent. The initiative, as a rule, derived from the regular communist partisans who realized well that the strong and perfidious enemy could be successfully combated only under the condition of high organization and iron discipline in the partisan detachments.

In guiding the armed struggle in the enemy rear, the Central Committee of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)], the State Defense Committee and Hq SHC were constantly concerned for strengthening the leadership of the partisan movement, improving the supply of the partisans with the necessary materiel, for training command personnel and specialists in partisan warfare and for strengthening the party and Komsomol organizations in the partisan formations.

The strengthening of leadership over the partisan movement was carried out by improving communications of the partisans with the unoccupied homeland, by improving the forms of operational and strategic leadership over the partisan forces as well as improving the planning of their combat activities. While during the summer of 1942 only around 30 percent of the partisan detachments had radio communication with the unoccupied territory (including one-half of these by using the equipment of neighbors), in November 1943 already 93 percent of the detachments were maintaining radio contact with the leadership bodies of the partisan struggle.<sup>10</sup>

The providing of the partisan formations with sending and receiving radios and the establishing of the Central, republic and oblast partisan movement staffs with precise functions gave the partisan struggle an evermore organized nature, they made it possible to focus the partisan efforts at the essential time on specific enemy objects in the interests of the Soviet Army and helped to improve cooperation with it.

Over the entire war, the Communist Party gave exceptionally great attention to logistical and medical support for the partisans. Air units and subunits were attached to the staffs of the partisan movement for delivering weapons, ammunition, food and medicines, for evacuating wounded as well as for transporting organizational groups, radio operators and medical workers into the enemy rear. Over the war years, military and civilian pilots made more than 109,000 aircraft sorties in the interests of the partisans.

The broadening of the scale of the nation-wide struggle against the Nazi occupiers and the increased number of partisans required a large number of experienced leaders, demolition specialists, scouts and radio operators. The VKP(b) Central Committee, Hq SHC, the command of the fronts, the Central and local partisan movement staffs [ShPD] undertook enormous work to train such personnel. The special schools of the Central, republic and oblast ShPD alone from 15 July 1942 through 15 February 1944 trained 22,450 commanders and specialists for the partisan detachments.<sup>12</sup>

It should be emphasized that during the years of the Great Patriotic War a number of TOE units for command and political personnel with definite salaries were introduced in the partisan detachments and formations. Officer and general

ranks were awarded in accord with the position held and combat accomplishments to commanders and political workers by orders of the NKO [People's Commissariat of Defense] and decrees of the USSR SNK [Council of People's Commissars]. All of this helped to improve leadership, to strengthen discipline and to increase the battleworthiness of the partisan formations.

Thus, improving the organizational structure of the partisan formations during the years of the Great Patriotic War carried out by their rational consolidation, by increasing the technical equipping of the detachments and formations (with automatic weapons, radios and explosives), by strengthening the role of the sabotage and reconnaissance subunits and by bringing the organization of the partisan forces closer to the structure of troop formations.

The measures carried out by the Communist Party during the years of the Great Patriotic War to develop the partisan movement and to strengthen the organizational structure of the partisan formations corresponded to the then existing situation and to the combat methods. These ensured high results from the armed combat of the Soviet partisans.

The experience of the Communist Party in the organizational development of the partisan forces was widely employed in the postwar period by the progressive forces in the national liberation wars of the second half of the 20th Century and had great practical revolutionary significance for them.

From the examples of the development of the national liberation wars over recent decades one can observe that as the struggle developed and its organization improved, the partisan forces grew into regular people's liberation armies which organized themselves along army lines, although they continued to operate in the enemy rear and employ methods of partisan warfare. The battalions, regiments and divisions of the South Vietnamese National Liberation Army, for example, were in no way prevented from defeating the troops of the American interventionists and their Saigon puppets by the fact that these units, in fighting by partisan methods, organized their forces along army lines. On the contrary, this helped them better plan and completely support the combat activities of the patriotic forces.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> PA IIP pri TsK KPU [Party Archives of the Party History Institute Under the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party], folio 1, inv. 9, stor. unit 29, sheets 81-82.

<sup>2</sup> See: V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 13, p 322.

<sup>3</sup> "Narodnaya voyna v tylu vruga" [The People's War in the Enemy Rear], Moscow, Moskovskiy rabochiy, 1971, pp 47-48.

<sup>4</sup> Leningradskiy oblastnoy partarkhiv [Leningrad Oblast Party Archives], folio 0-116, inv. 1, stor. unit 1729, sheet 18-19.

- <sup>5</sup> Kalininskiy oblastnoy partarkhiv [Kalinin Oblast Party Archives], folio 147, box 5, stor. unit 71, sheets 25-26.
- <sup>6</sup> "Sovetskiy partizany" [The Soviet Partisans], Moscow, Politizdat, 1963, p 436.
- <sup>7</sup> PA IIP pri TsK KP Moldavii [Party Archives of the Party History Institute Under the Central Committee of the Moldavian Communist Party], folio 3280, inv. 1, stor. unit 32, sheet 60; stor. unit 109, sheet 88; stor. unit 132, sheets 1-12; stor. unit 133, sheets 5, 7; stor. unit 138, sheets 18-53.
- <sup>8</sup> Leningradskiy oblastnoy partarkhiv, folio 0-116, inv. 1, stor. unit 222, sheets 7-8.
- <sup>9</sup> [Not in text]
- <sup>10</sup> TsPA IML pri TsK KPSS [Central Party Archives of the Marxism-Leninism Institute Under the CPSU Central Committee], folio 61, inv. 1, stor. unit 784, sheet 4.
- <sup>11</sup> [Not in text]
- <sup>12</sup> TsPA IML pri TsK KPSS, folio 69, inv. 8, file 27, sheets 20, 23.

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## MEDICAL SUPPORT FOR OPERATIONS IN LAST PART OF WORLD WAR II EXAMINED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 84 (signed to press 27 Dec 83) pp 47-53

[Article by Col Med Serv V. Grin': "Basic Ways of Improving Medical Support for the Troops in the Second Period of the Great Patriotic War"]

[Text] By the start of the counteroffensive by the Soviet troops at Stalingrad, the medical service had acquired significance experience in working under the difficult conditions of a combat situation. The difficulties and shortcomings occurring at the outset of the war were largely overcome and measures had been taken to ensure medical support. One of the most important tasks at that time was to further increase the resources of the medical service and primarily to strengthen the army hospital bases.

The Main Military Medical Directorate of the Red Army (chief, Lt Gen Med Serv Ye. I. Smirnov), proceeding from the experience of the previous operations, worked out calculations to establish a grouping of medical facilities for the field forces. The adopted standards were approved and promulgated by an order of the NKO [People's Commissariat of Defense]. In accord with these, each army operating as an assault grouping of a front should have a hospital base with a capacity of at least 8,000-10,000 beds. At the same time, a higher bed rate was set for the hospital bases of the fronts.<sup>1</sup>

The implementing of the designated plans required the carrying out of serious organizational measures, the more efficient allocation of the hospital bed network between the armies and fronts as well as the nation's rear, an increase in the bed capacity and the establishing of new medical facilities. By the start of 1943, the total number of hospital beds in the Soviet Army had risen by 21.2 percent in comparison with the same period of 1942.<sup>2</sup> The principle of allocating the hospital beds had also been changed. Thus, on 1 August 1941, some 68.1 percent, that is, a larger portion of their total number, was in the nation's rear, 22.8 percent was in the front rear and only 9.1 percent in the army rear.<sup>3</sup> By January 1943, the supply of hospital beds for the armies and fronts had been substantially increased. At this time the armies already had 27.5 percent of the total bed capacity, the fronts had 44.9 percent while 27.6 percent remained in the rear areas of the nation.<sup>4</sup> The redistribution of the hospital beds increased the capacity of the medical service of the operational army and primarily its army level and made it possible to reduce the number of sick and wounded evacuated beyond the fronts.

Regardless of the enormous work aimed at increasing the capacity of the medical service in the operational army, during the second period of the war it was not possible to fully provide hospital facilities for the operational field forces. By the start of the counteroffensive by the Soviet troops at Stalingrad, the medical service of the fronts was experiencing a significant shortage of personnel and facilities. Thus, on 19 November 1942, there was an average of 4,400 beds in the hospital bases of the armies of the Don Front, some 6,600 for the Stalingrad Front and 1,800 for the Southwestern Front. The average number of beds in the army hospital bases for all these fronts was 4,700 beds.<sup>5</sup>

The availability of hospital facilities for the armies was approximately the same in the Battle of Kursk. By the start of the defensive engagement, the army hospital bases of the Central Front had, for example, 4,600 beds each and on the Voronezh Front 5,200 beds. In order to increase the capacity of the hospital bases, the armies of these fronts set up, correspondingly, 2,900 and 1,800 beds above the TOE.<sup>6</sup>

Subsequently, as resources were acquired, the availability of beds for the medical service increased. The change in the nature of combat and the conducting of major offensive operations required greater mobility, maneuverability and a readiness to rapidly regroup a significant portion of the facilities depending upon the developing situation. This could be done only by having field mobile hospitals equipped with transport and the appropriate medical and service supplies. Significant efforts were made by the medical service and the Rear Services of the Armed Forces during this period to establish both new mobile field hospitals (PPG) as well as to reorganize a portion of the evacuation hospitals as PPG. By 1 January 1943, the chair of PPG in the total bed capacity of the hospital bases, in comparison with the data on 1 January 1942, had risen from 9.1 percent to 27.6 percent.<sup>7</sup>

The Main Military Medical Directorate (GVSU) over the entire war gave great attention to the manning of the medical service. In 1943, the shortage of different medical personnel categories in the operational army had been largely eliminated. Thus, the manning rate for physicians had risen on 1 May 1943 up to 92 percent and for feldshers [middle-level medical personnel] up to 99.9 percent. The supply of the operational army with senior operating nurses at the start of 1943 had reached 94.5-100 percent and for medical instructors 70.1-99.1 percent.<sup>8</sup> In manning the fronts with medical personnel, preference was always given to the field forces involved in combat.

The physical plant of the medical service continued to be strengthened in 1943. The fronts and armies were regularly supplied with everything essential, including: bandaging material, surgical instruments, medicines, banked blood and blood substitutes. In order to fully supply the fronts, the GVSU sharply curtailed the delivery of medical supplies to the interior military districts. Everything possible was done to most fully satisfy the requirements of the medical service for equipment and transport.

However, in the second period of the war there still was not enough medical evacuation transport. Thus, at the beginning of the operations to liberate the Left-Bank Ukraine, the shortage of motor vehicles in the medical companies of the Steppe Front armies reached 42 percent while 17.3 percent of the available

transport required major overhaul.<sup>9</sup> In line with the shortage of motor transport, the use of the return (empty) trips of supply motor transport assumed important significance for medical evacuation. During the period of the liberation battles on the Kursk Salient, the 13th Army, for example, evacuated more than 42 percent of all the wounded beyond the hospital base using the return trips of public transport; in the 70th Army the figure was 71 percent and in the 60th Army up to 80 percent.<sup>10</sup>

It must be pointed out that by the start of the second period of the war, the GVSU and the Scientific Medical Council under the GVSU Chief had generalized the experience of the medical service during the first period of the war. The necessary adjustments had been made in the adopted forms and methods of medical support for troop combat. The materials of the plenums of the Scientific Medical Council became a program for improving medical support for the troops and for steadily increasing the level of medical work.

At the next, 7th plenum, in April 1943, the Scientific Medical Council discussed, for example, the questions of reconstructive surgery, the treatment of gunshot wounds to the joints, amputations and military field therapy. Giving reports on the designated problems were the leading specialists and leaders of the Soviet Army Medical Service, the chief of the GVSU Ye. I. Smirnov, the chief surgeon N. N. Burdenko, the deputy chief surgeon S. S. Girgolav, the chief therapist M. S. Vovsi, the deputy chief therapist P. I. Yegorov and others.

One of the basic areas for improving medical support for troop combat, for improving the quality of the work done by the medical service and improving the results of treating the sick and wounded was the organizing of specialized medical aid at the army and front hospital bases. The providing of such aid to all sick and wounded requiring it, starting on the army level, was a most important provision in the system of graduated treatment with evacuation carried out according to particular purpose. Although the elements of specializing the medical facilities of the front hospital bases (and to a lesser degree the army ones) could be noticed on a number of fronts even in 1941, the unfavorable operational situation, the difficult position with bed capacity, the lack of medical personnel and essential supplies as well as other circumstances did not make it possible to develop specialized medical aid on the required level in the operational army. In line with the forced retreat of our troops, the situation necessitated the evacuation of the basic mass of wounded beyond the fronts, to the medical facilities of the deep rear, where in a majority of instances they also received specialized aid. For example, in the Battle of Moscow, 70 percent of all the wounded were evacuated beyond the fronts.<sup>11</sup>

The material and organizational prerequisites for the broad development of specialized medical aid for the sick and wounded, starting from the medical facilities of the army-level hospital bases, were established in the second period of the war. Specialization of the field hospitals was carried out by assigning to them specialized groups from the separate medical reinforcement companies. Along with this specialized hospitals (surgical, therapeutic, psychoneurological and others) were included in the front hospital bases and in a number of instances also the army ones. As a whole, the beds of the hospital bases began to be allocated to 10-12 and more specialties. For example, in the

70th Army in the summer of 1943, the providing of neurosurgical, jaw and face, eye and otolaryngological aid to wounded was organized in the special surgical hospitals alone.<sup>12</sup> In the medical facilities of the hospital base of the Central Front, the beds were specialized considering the specialized medical aid for persons wounded in the head, in the hip and major joints as well as the chest and stomach. In addition, urological, gynecological, obstetric and therapeutic aid were provided as well as specialized medical aid for infectious patients, for the lightly wounded (slightly sick) and others.

Regardless of the complicated conditions under which the medical personnel had to work, the indicators for the outcome of treatment for sick and wounded in the second period of the war improved noticeably in comparison with the first. Thus, while in 1942, 52.6 percent of the total number of sick and wounded were returned to combat from the field medical facilities and evacuation hospitals of the fronts, in 1943 this indicator had reached 65 percent.<sup>13</sup>

Of important significance for improving the activities of the medical service was the introduction of unified organizational and procedural principles into the work practices of all the medical facilities. This involved primarily the employment of more effective methods for providing medical aid and treating the sick and wounded as well as the methods of utilizing the resources of the medical service in the basic types of combat and the methods for carrying out sanitary-hygiene and antiepidemic measures.

The timeliness of these questions was caused by the fact that with the development of the medical service, the medical units and facilities received many civilian physicians who had varying skills and practical experience and belonged to different scientific schools. This often led during the first period of the war where at various stages of the medical evacuation the physicians resorted to different methods of treatment and providing medical aid to the sick and wounded and this, in turn, had a negative effect on the therapeutic process.

The central bodies of the military medical service issued to the troops the necessary directives, manuals and official letters which were of important significance for improving medical support for the operational army. Thus, in 1943, the GVSU issued the Instructions on combating secondary hemorrhages, the Instructions on Eye Assistance in the Red Army, the Order (together with the USSR NKZ [People's Commissariat of Public Health]) on Organizing Specialized Hospitals for Providing Special Aid in the Area of Reconstructive Surgery and other guiding documents. The leading specialists from the medical service conducted great organizational and procedural work on the spot. The uniform provisions and principles for medical support for the troops rapidly became available to all the Army and Navy physician personnel and lay at the basis of its practical activities.

In the second period of the war, in essence, certain operational-tactical provisions for medical support for major offensive operations were worked out anew and successfully employed. In particular, the concept was established of the advisable grouping of the operational-level medical facilities on the basic operational sectors by establishing interarmy hospital bases as well as inter-front ones. Thus, in January 1943, in defeating the surrounded enemy grouping

at Stalingrad, interarmy hospital bases for the Don Front were established in the area of Ilovlya and Kachalino stations, in the population points of Peskovatka and Vertyachiy, as well as in the towns of Kalach and Krasnoarmeysk. The hospital bases located in the area of Peskovatka and Vertyachiy had been organized and were operated in the interests of the 21st, 64th and 57th Armies. Interarmy hospital bases were also established in other fronts.

This form of maneuvering the resources proved effective and subsequently became widespread. It enriched the theory and practice of medical support with new important provisions. In the Battle of Kursk, with a shortage of medical facilities for the armies fighting on the main operational sectors, the military medical directorates of the fronts established interarmy hospital bases in using its reserve resources. This maneuver was practiced most actively in the offensive operations of the Western Front.

In the second period of the war, the medical service began to more frequently organize its work according to the evacuation routes and provided medical support for certain operational troop groupings and not individual formations. Representatives of the military medical directorates of the fronts and the medical sections of the armies headed the activities of the medical facilities assigned to support these routes. They began to be called chiefs of the evacuation routes. For better organizing graduated treatment with evacuation according to specific purpose, in the armies on the evacuation routes (ways) non-T/O headquarters bodies were set up and these assigned to the army and often to the front hospital bases the sick and wounded depending upon the nature of the wounding (illness). These bodies received the name of medical distribution points (MRP), distribution posts (RP), dispatcher posts and so forth.<sup>14</sup>

Improving the planning of the medical service's work was of great importance for upgrading medical support. During the counteroffensive by the Soviet troops at Stalingrad, the plans for medical-evacuation support were worked out in all the fronts and armies. However, these had certain shortcomings and primarily there was no uniformity in the method of working out and drawing up such documents.

In being perfectly aware of the importance of rapidly introducing uniform planning methods for medical support into the work practices of the headquarters bodies of the medical service, the GVSU in December 1942 worked out and distributed to the operational army the "Sample Medical-Evacuation Plan of the Army Chief of the Medical Service" and procedural instructions for compiling this. Somewhat later on the GVSU held a scientific conference on planning questions and this involved the chiefs of the medical service of a number of fronts, workers from the military medical directorates, sections and other headquarters bodies of the medical service. All of this helped to improve the quality of working out the planning documents, to more fully and completely consider the factors which influence the activities of the medical service as well as to improve the medical support for troop combat.

In the operations of the groups of fronts, the need arose to settle many questions related to the medical support for troop combat in close cooperation, in constantly coordinating the efforts of the medical service both on the army and front levels. With a disrupting in the fronts of the adopted system of

medical and evacuation support (as a consequence of the unfavorably developing operational and tactical situation), the evacuation routes were changed and the flow of sick and wounded was switched to the hospital bases of the adjacent armies. For example, in the Battle of Kursk, due to difficulties with evacuation in the hospital base of the 6th Guards Army, the flow of wounded was shifted to the medical facilities of the 40th Army and the 1st Tank Army as well as to the hospital base of the Central Front (FEP-73).<sup>15</sup> With a significant distance of the front's hospital base from the troops and a sharp disruption in the evacuation of sick and wounded from the army-level hospital bases to the front rear, often the hospital bases of the adjacent fronts were employed. This was the case, in particular, in the counteroffensive at Stalingrad and in the Battle of Kursk.

It must be pointed out that such forms of cooperation between the medical service of the armies and fronts were more often an emergency, forced measure. In subsequent operations, in the planning of medical support, possible situational changes were profoundly and thoroughly analyzed and provision was made for the corresponding maneuvering of the resources as well as the cooperation of the medical resources of the fronts and armies. The direct leadership of the GVSU contributed largely to improving control over the medical service, to bettering the forms and methods of utilizing the existing resources and to promptly coordinating the efforts of the medical services of the fronts which were carrying out a major mission. In organizing and carrying out medical support for major operations, the leadership of the GVSU organized cooperation among the medical service of the fronts and made the necessary adjustments in the activities of the medical service headquarters bodies. Thus, in the period of preparing for the counteroffensive at Stalingrad, the operational army was visited by a group of leading medical specialists headed by the GVSU chief, Gen Ye. I. Smirnov.

In the course of the offensive operations which were conducted at a rapid pace and to a significant depth, exceptional importance was assumed by ensuring the mobility and maneuverability of the medical facilities and achieving continuity of the medical and evacuation measures. For this reason, even in the course of conducting defensive engagements, the necessary reserves of medical personnel and equipment were established, the medical facilities of the army and front hospital bases were freed of sick and wounded and thorough preparation of the medical personnel was carried out. Thus, in the Battle of Kursk on the Central Front, by the start of the offensive only 15.3 percent of the army beds and 27.6 percent of the front's beds were occupied by sick and wounded. On the Voronezh Front, the bed occupancy factor by the start of the offensive was 48.4 percent.<sup>16</sup> The medical service of the Central Front carried out a bold and effective maneuvering of resources from the interior. The bringing of the first echelon of the front's hospital base closer to the armies made it possible to keep their hospital bases, particularly of the 13th and 70th armies, for receiving wounded during the most intense period of combat. The moving of the first echelons of the front-level hospital bases into the army rear areas became a widespread maneuver for the medical service resources, creating conditions for the optimum employment of the army-level medical facilities in the course of the offensive.



A fundamentally important element in developing the theory and practice of medical support was the elaboration of a maneuvering of the amount of medical aid depending upon the developing operational-rear situation and the state of the stages of medical evacuation. In the Battle of Moscow, as in the other operations of the first period of the war, the scope of surgical work in virtually all the field medical facilities was sharply curtailed. However, the change in the amount of medical aid did not have a planned nature which would be predetermined at the outset of the operation but was aimed merely at reducing the amount. In organizing medical support in the course of the counteroffensive by the Soviet troops at Stalingrad, maneuvering the amount of medical aid in the stages of medical evacuation was planned for the first time and not only by reducing it with unfavorable circumstances but, and this was particularly important, a compulsory and immediate expansion of it with the normalizing of the situation and its favorable development. This concept was extremely important on the organizational level. A decision to alter the amount of medical aid could be taken by the superior chief of the medical service (the chief medical specialist).<sup>17</sup> Planning a change in the amount of medical aid was developed in subsequent operations.

Thus, in the second period of the Great Patriotic War the theory and practice of medical support continued to develop successfully.

The basic trends in improving medical support were the following: increased mobility and maneuverability of the facilities of the medical service, the more rational (for the basic operational sectors) grouping of them on the operational level and carrying out an effective maneuvering of the hospital facilities in the course of operations. Of important significance was the bringing of the basic types of medical aid closer to the troops and organizing the providing of specialized medical aid, starting from the army-level hospital bases, for all sick and wounded requiring it.

The art of managing the medical service of the operational level continued to be improved. In carrying out suddenly arising tasks, operational groups were often created and these carried out independent tasks in the most complicated and responsible sectors not only on the army level but also the front level of the medical service.

The basic indicators for the work of the medical service in providing medical aid and treatment to the sick and wounded (the times for delivery to the stages of medical evacuation, surgical activity, the operation rates, the frequency and activeness of providing specialized medical aid and so forth) were higher than in the first period of the Great Patriotic War.

The experience gained by the medical service in the second period of the war was generalized and played an important role in improving medical support for the troops in the course of the subsequent operations of the Great Patriotic War.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Ocherki istorii sovetskoy voyennoy meditsiny" [Essays on the History of Soviet Military Medicine], Leningrad, Meditsina, 1968, p 142.



- <sup>2</sup> Arkhiv Voenno-meditsinskogo muzeya [Archives of the Military Medical Museum] (AVMM), folio 1, inv. 47167, file 11, sheets 30, 198.
- <sup>3</sup> "Ocherki istorii sovetskoy...", p 207.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp 207, 247.
- <sup>5</sup> AVMM, folio 1, inv. 4068/1, file 126, sheet 3.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., inv. 47165, file 136, sheets 210, 252.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., inv. 47167, file 11, sheet 198.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., inv. 47166, file 174, sheets 34, 453.
- <sup>9</sup> "Ocherki istorii sovetskoy...", p 248.
- <sup>10</sup> AVMM, folio 1, inv. 47167, file 11, sheets 32-37.
- <sup>11</sup> "Tyl Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Rear Services of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1977, p 312.
- <sup>12</sup> AVMM, folio 5, inv. 1, file 132, box 34, sheet 241.
- <sup>13</sup> "Ocherki istorii sovetskoy...", p 265.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., p 251.
- <sup>15</sup> VOENNO-MEDITSINSKIY ZHURNAL, No 7, 1983, p 19.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid., p 18.
- <sup>17</sup> AVMM, folio 1, inv. 4066/8, file 203, sheets 69-82.

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## WORLD WAR II: FIRST BATTLE OF BORDER TROOP CADETS DESCRIBED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 84 (signed to press 27 Dec 83) pp 54-60

[Article by Hero of the Soviet Union, Col (Ret) N. Kalutskiy: "The First Battle"]

[Text] Our units were heavily engaged on the Luga defensive line. The Nazis were pushing toward Leningrad.

On 17 August 1941, we, the officer candidates at the Novo-Petergof Border Military Political School of the NKVD [People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs] imeni K. Ye. Voroshilov, mustered at the warning and were led directly from the classrooms in the morning into the school's yard where vehicles were already waiting.

...The August earth smelled of mushrooms. Soggy after the recent rain, in the root-bound clumps, it was hard to shovel on the parapet. Sweating, we dug up the rich earth which had given its last peacetime harvest. Wave after wave of airplanes with a swastika passed overhead. The canonade rumbled frighteningly close.

It was hot and close. It was a good thing that a stream was flowing not far off. One could have a drink of cold water and cool one's heated face. Infrequently from off to the right we were reached by a moist, briny wind. Over there, beyond the forest was the Baltic Sea. A little behind was a small village. It was empty as the inhabitants had abandoned it.

"Officer candidates!" rang the voice of the battalion commander Nikolay Aleksandrovich Shorin, in rising above the distant roar of the enemy aircraft. "Remember this day! Remember the name of this village: Russkiye Antashi. From here commences our path to Berlin."

We remembered. But then we still did not know that not everyone would not reach Berlin.

Maj Shorin was walking along the fresh trenches, biting his lip and listening to the approaching roar of enemy artillery and looking searchingly in the sweaty, dirty faces of the officer candidates. We guessed that he was wondering how his students would behave in meeting the enemy face to face. In truth,

many of us have undergone tempering during service on the frontier. But service, even intense and difficult but under peacetime conditions is one thing while a war is something quite else.

I also was not a novice in the army. I had served 2 years on the southern frontier and entered the school holding the rank of a deputy political instructor and I wore four triangles on my gorget patches. With the outbreak of the war, the length of instruction for the officer candidates was reduced from 2 years to 6 months. For this reason, we studied almost around the clock. But with yesterday's alert our training had ended.

"No worry, comrade officer candidates, you will take your graduating exams on the battlefield!" said the battalion commander happily. Yes, we knew this. Here, on this line, we would meet our first exam not only for the rank of political instructor in the border troops but also for our right to life on this earth.

While in the assembly area, the chief of the school, Regimental Commissar I. N. Grigor'yev read an order according to which the school consisting of two battalions was to take up the offensive on a line of the village Russkiye Antashi, Yelizavetino Station and in cooperation with units from the 2d Division of the People's Militia to close the breaches which formed in the defenses of the 8th Army.<sup>1</sup>

Our first battalion under the command of Maj N. A. Shorin consisting of four companies and an attached antiaircraft battery concentrated its efforts on defending the villages of Russkiye Antashi, Ozhogino, Volgino, while the second headed by Capt A. A. Zolotarev and consisting of four officer candidate companies and one combat engineer company was to defend the population points of Pul'yevoy, Smol'kovo, Dyltsy. The total length of the defenses was around 30 km. This forced the command to organize the defenses according to the principle of strongpoints. Here chief attention was given to holding the main roads leading to Leningrad.

Soon thereafter the first battalion increased its size by almost a thousand men due to certain subunits from the 2d Division of the People's Militia which had pulled back from semi-encirclement into the area of our defenses. The howitzer battalion and two cannon batteries of the militia significantly strengthened the fire plan.<sup>2</sup>

"Well, we will now develop into a regiment," commented Shorin with satisfaction and immediately assigned the school instructors Sr Lts A. A. Chelidze and F. P. Kharin as commanders of the new battalions while yesterday's platoon commanders were put at the head of companies. The Commissar V. I. Lukanin advised that political instructors be appointed from the best officer candidates and immediately proposed the candidates.

"OK," agreed the major, having looked through the list.

The battalion commander was respectful of the commissar and valued his amazing organizational talents, party principledness and ability to work with others.

Shorin walked slowly along the line of militiamen, looking closely at their tired faces.

"Well, aces, things heated up, didn't they?"

A slight laugh ran through the ranks. The men literally threw off the oppressive burden and straightened their shoulders.

"Don't worry, we will survive," said the battalion commander confidently and loudly so that everyone would hear. "Well, what if we had to retreat, that is not so terrible. We will come back, we must come back. And for each killed, as we say, two others will take their place. The time has come to deal a decisive rebuff to the enemy."

"It is time! High time!" rang out in the ranks.

"Well and good," said Shorin looking at his watch. "Are there any questions? No? Dismissed!"

The men began to improve the area of the defenses assigned to them. The officer candidates also further equipped their positions, deepened the trenches and improved the camouflage. We firmly straddled the Kingisepp Highway.<sup>3</sup>

The Nazis appeared at sunrise on 19 August. They were moving on motorcycles in a column in single file and then reformed two abreast. They were traveling at a high speed. The officer candidates from the battle outpost, letting them draw closer, opened up with accurate fire. The motorcycles began to turn over. The surviving vehicles turned around sharply and with motors roaring, disappeared from view.

At that time I was the messenger at the battalion command post located at a small dugout in the center of our positions.

"They acted correctly," came the voice of Maj Shorin speaking over the telephone with the commander of the battle outposts, Lt A. Kh. Stepanov. "And now be doubly vigilant. The Nazis will try to pay us back. They will bracket us with artillery fire and then the tanks will move up."

He got in touch with all the companies one after another and also with the artillery troops. He gave orders in an even, calm voice.

All my life I have remembered this remarkable man, a severe and courageous soldier, a passionate Bolshevik who dedicated all his forces and knowledge to the combat training of officer candidates. By the start of the war, N. A. Shorin had already served 15 years in the army, he had been a rank-and-file border troop, the commander of a cavalry platoon and a senior instructor for combat training of a border detachment. He had completed the Military Academy imeni M. V. Frunze. He was an instructor and then the chief of a series of military disciplines in our school. Now he was leading us into our first battle.

Then he looked at us, the messengers, and said:

"Now you will be more essential there. Go to your companies...."

Soon thereafter the Nazis began the artillery softening up. They did not spare the rounds. The ground beneath us trembled. Deafened by the bursts of the shells and the whistle of the bullets, we stood in our trenches with clumps of earth, stone and pieces of trees falling on our heads. It became dark from the dust and smoke. A hot stench stopped your breath. I was covered in sweat but my back was cold. I do not know how long this hell lasted. Suddenly everything grew quiet. The silence which set in was so unexpected that everyone looked out of their trenches. And through the still undissipated yellow-black fog we could see the Nazis. Standing upright, without a single shot an extended line of submachine gunners was approaching us while on the flanks tanks were moving with infantry on the armor. The clank of their tracks could be heard more and more clearly.

I saw to the right and left of me my comrades trampling down the earth which had fallen onto the bottom of the trench in order to have a firmer support under their feet and arranging their hand grenades for easy reach. The bayonets were in position and the rifles loaded. Externally the fellows looked calm. But I myself knew what the price of this calmness was.

Commissar Lukanin walked along the trench. In sucking on a piece of grass, as if observing an ordinary tactical exercise, he told us:

"They want to win with impudence. They think our nerves will give out just by their appearance."

"They have opened with a psychological move," responded the company party organizer, Nikolay Sayenko from his trench. "And now we will force them to bow to the Russian mother earth! Shoot to kill, fellows."

Our cannons roared behind us. Shells began to explode in the enemy extended lines. Their sparse explosions formed breaches in the ranks of the attackers but these were quickly closed and the grey-green wave rolled inexorably toward us.

"Why don't we fire?" said someone who could not endure the tense waiting.

"You cannot fire without the command. Sight four. Aim at the chest. Fire at the vision slits of the tanks. Throw the tanks only under the tracks," came the voice of the platoon commander, Lt Aleksandr Stepanov. The calmness of the commander returned to us the self-possession developed on the frontier.

The frontier.... It taught us the laws of military comradeship, unstinting dedication to the motherland and vigilance, we learned to recognize good and evil, friends and foes, not to fear difficulties and to surmount them. I thank you, frontier, and I bow low to you for wise schooling in life....

Now and then I looked at my commander. I was amazed by his restraint. The Nazis were already 100-150 m away. Then a single shot cracked dryly. Stepanov

had given the signal. A heavy volley followed. A German officer jumped out front behind a tank. Waving his pistol he urged the soldiers on.

My heart was beating loudly. I pulled the trigger evenly. Having dropped his pistol, the Nazi fell. Having put a new cartridge in the barrel, I was waiting somewhat numb for him to get up. No. He lay there, his legs apart in the dusty road.

"Did you see that?" I shouted to my friend Vasya Maydikov.

But he did not hear me. Holding the butt of his long-barreled heavy antitank rifle against his shoulder, he was firing at a tank. After each round he made a face. I could almost physically feel the pain which he was experiencing from the recoil.

We had received antitank rifles just before leaving for the front. Previously we had known nothing about this weapon as it was just being developed by industry. We were mastering it in combat. And at first not everything turned out like you wanted. The loud rounds of the antitank guns sounded both to the right and to the left and it felt like I could even hear the bullets striking the armor.

Rounds of the 37-mm antiaircraft cannons were also heard. The first tank was hit. Another enemy T-IV struck the minefield. But then our cannons fell silent. Evidently they were out of shells. But the tanks kept coming. And suddenly the closest tank to us slowed down. On its path was a large boulder. In going around it, the tank turned its side to us. At that very instant Vasiliy sent several bullets into the side and then hit the tracks.

The tank started and then spun like a top.

"You stopped it!" shouted another of my neighbors, Zhenya Gagarin. "Finish it off, Vasya."

But the tank turret swung around and we scarcely had time to duck our heads. The Nazis fired at point-blank range. The shells overturned the parapet and we were buried in sand and engulfed in smoke. The smoke had scarcely dispersed when Vasiliy got off another round. This time, he hit the gasoline tank. The tank began to smoke heavily and stopped firing.

We rushed to the antitank weaponsman, embraced him and laughed with joy. Our machine guns chattered more decisively and the rifle volleys became even heavier. We hit the enemy targets trying to use ammunition economically. The Nazis gradually lost their formation. They hugged the tanks. Resting their automatics in their stomach, they fired long bursts. Spouts of earth flew up in front of our trenches from the bullets.

"Comrade lieutenant!" called the machine gunner Vadim Avakyan to the platoon commander with alarm. "There are more tanks. And infantry."

We got ready to repel the new attack regardless of the paucity of antitank weapons. We did not even have antitank grenades and used ordinary ones,

stringing them together with telephone wire. It was an art to throw a string of grenades. Even a trained fighter could throw it only 20 m or so. But it was not only a question of throwing but also hitting the armored vehicle which was coming at you. Throwing a bottle filled with a burning mixture required even greater ability and self-possession.

"Weed out the infantry!" shouted Maj Shorin. "We will stop the tanks which have broken through by grenades."

One tank approached our trench. Yevgeniy Gagarin seized a string of grenades and threw it. But it did not hit. The tank crawled over the trench. Then the skills obtained in tank rollover lessons which were often conducted in our school came in handy. Zhenya dropped to the bottom of the trench. When the tank had passed over and sky appeared over his head again, the officer candidate jumped out of the trench and broke a bottle with a burning mixture on the motor compartment of the tank. He threw another at the turret. The tank burst into flames. Its motor coughed and fell silent. Several tanks were hit by antitank weapons. The Nazi tanks did not push on but turned back. The infantry hurried behind them. The first attack had been driven off.<sup>4</sup>

But there was no time to celebrate the victory. We had to rebuild the destroyed trenches and construct new ones. The hard ground was difficult to work. The Muscovite Yevgeniy Gagarin worked on his foxhole fondly and passionately. I watched him with envy, repeating his movements on the sly, and I wondered: "How many such foxholes have been dug along our entire front! The front is large and each soldier has his foxhole. And each is responsible for it. If you keep your own and your neighbor keeps his then the front will hold. Hence, each soldier is responsible not only for himself but also for the entire front."

Making room for himself on a cartridge box, the agitator Sgt Sasha Ramzayev was drawing something on a sheet of paper. Stretching out his arm, he looked closely at his creation and then handed the sheet to me. On it was a telling drawing. A Soviet soldier with a grenade in hand was rushing at a Nazi tank. The soldier had a turned-up nose, plump lips, a mirthful smile, a funny lock on the back of his head, the very image of Zhen'ka Gagarin. Ramzayev had truly captured the characteristic traits of his appearance and for this reason did not feel it necessary to name him. In large letters under the drawing he merely wrote: "Glory to the hero!" And in the upper corner in smaller letters he wrote: "Have a look and pass it on."

"But you must give the name of the hero," I said to Ramzayev. "Many do not know him by face."

"Right," agreed Aleksandr. And beneath the drawing he wrote: "Officer Candidate Yevgeniy Gagarin today set afire a Nazi tank in combat."

I was still looking at the sheet of paper and at the bold letters "Glory to the hero!" I simply did not believe it. Our Zhenya, a simple Moscow fellow, happy and somewhat whimsical was all of a sudden a hero! Previously I had felt that only a special person who was unlike others could become a hero, that this was written on his face and that he was not like everyone else.



Ramzayev's pencil again began quickly moving over the paper. And again a second drawing: a soldier with the long barrel of an antitank rifle is piercing a tank with a black swastika.

"Vasya Maydikov!" I exclaimed. "You, Sasha, should be an artist."

"Why?" laughed Ramzayev. "You and I have a fine profession, a political worker. And he should be able to do everything, to fight, to find the way to a soldier's heart, to sing, to dance and also to draw. Certainly visual agitation moves our brothers...let us pass on our 'express leaflet' along the trenches. As soon as you hit a tank, I will also draw you and then you will be famous in all the regiment."

Fifteen Junkers flew over our positions and dropped bombs. And again the Nazis appeared from out of the woods. Our company commander, D. G. Burnos and the political instructor A. A. Gabov were with us in the trenches. The political instructor said to the soldiers:

"Look, we have taught them the rules of conduct on our land. They have forgotten the psychological approach and are attacking on their bellies."

Yes, the Nazis were crawling. They were crawling over the scorched earth which had still not yet cooled down.

"Let them come closer," commanded Burnos. "Save your cartridges!"

We drove off this attack comparatively easily. Later on the enemy tried three times to advance. Twice we rose to a counterattack.

Toward evening the enemy took a rest. But we had no time for this. Again we rebuilt our destroyed foxholes. To our joy, ammunition was delivered. We helped the artillery troops unload the heavy boxes with shells and dragged the grenades and zinc-plated boxes with cartridges to the foxholes. We would survive!

We slept for 2 hours without letting go of our weapons. It was just beginning to get light when Lt Burnos appeared in the trench. Already shaved, in a clean tunic with a fresh collar, he assembled us for a talk. The discussion was about yesterday's battle, about our successes and failings.

"Bravura and recklessness are harmful," began the company commander. "We have often been coming out of the trenches unnecessarily. To die in battle is an easy thing. War is kind not to the person who wants to live but rather to the one who is able to fight for life and knows how to win. To destroy the enemy and to remain alive is true military skill."

The commander had not yet finished the conversation when the enemy began heavy artillery softening up. The lieutenant ordered everyone to immediately take shelter in the previously prepared shelters. Only observers remained in the trenches. With the halting of fire everyone resumed his place in the trench and prepared to repel the enemy attack. Nazi tanks appeared on the battlefield with the infantry following behind in a close line.

Our artillery opened up with gun fire. The howitzers fired from indirect positions and virtually all the 45-mm cannons had been moved up for direct laying. In the battle formations of our company was a battery of 45-mm cannons under the command of Lt V. P. Brin'ko. We looked at them dubiously as they were very small. But suddenly we saw two tanks catch fire. And they were still far away from us, some 500 m. Now we looked at the artillery troops with respect and amazement.

For the enemy our weapons were like a knife into the heart. The Nazis concentrated their fire on the battery. The crew of the cannon nearest to us was put out of action. Lt Brin'ko ran up to it and with an accurate round hit another tank. He fired the weapon even though he had been wounded twice. The day was heavy going. We lost count of the enemy attacks. The scorched field in front of us was strewn with Nazi corpses. Toward evening combat died down. We again began to rebuild the destroyed foxholes and trenches. I noticed that the fellows began taking more care of their shovel than their mess kit.

It was impossible to sleep. The enemy kept up artillery firing all night. It seemed as though each bit of our defenses had been dug up with shells. The earth shook just like in an earthquake (I had once experienced this on the southern frontier), your head spun and you felt sick to your stomach. Things had just quieted down when we came out of our shelters and took up our places in the trench. This time the Nazis were attacking with larger forces. Groups of tanks were moving on the flanks.

All our artillery went into action. Spouts of shell bursts rose and fell over the enemy lines. The glade was blanketed in smoke and dust. Contributing to the deafening roar was the chatter of machine gun bursts and the crack of rifle rounds. An enemy shell struck the parapet of the foxhole in front of Lt Stepanov. Bleeding profusely, he sank slowly to the bottom.

"The lieutenant has been hit! We will avenge the Krauts!" shouted the officer candidate Aleksey Vashchenko.

But the commander was still alive. He had merely lost consciousness for an instant.

"I will avenge myself," and having seized the rifle of an officer candidate wounded in the arm, Lt Stepanov opened fire against the Nazis.

"Water," groaned a wounded soldier.

Yes, everyone had a dry mouth. The canteens had long been empty. There was a small stream nearby, some 100 m away. I rose up out of the foxhole in order to look at it and was seen by Stepanov.

"Kalutskiy, go get water!"

I collected the water bottles from my neighbors and crawled out of the trench. The Nazi mortar gunners had seemingly just been waiting for this. I had barely moved and there was a burst in front of me. Crawling to the stream, I filled the canteens. The way back seemed even more difficult and longer to me. But I

made it. I had four canteens on a strap. But where was my foxhole? In its place was a large circular crater.

"You were lucky, Kolya!" the officer candidates laughed, "as soon as you crawled out of your burrow a shell went in. It didn't find you and exploded out of anger."

"That is a soldier's lot for you," said Stepanov and shook my hand as if to congratulate me.

I handed over the canteens to him. And as if from under the earth, the ubiquitous nurse Vera Tsareva appeared.

"Comrade lieutenant, let us give the water to the wounded. They need it more."

She took all the canteens and left.

"OK, Kalutskiy, back to the stream."

While I was crawling for the water, the machine gunner Vadim Avakyan was wounded.<sup>5</sup> I was ordered to take his place. I knew the machine gun well. My "Maxim" chattered steadily. Then a bullet pierced the housing. I quickly plugged the hole with clay and bound it with a footcloth. I sacrificed the rest of the water. And again back to firing. The Nazis had succeeded in infiltrating between the units and had cut off our platoon. We took up an all-round defense. Now the enemy was everywhere: on the front, on the flanks and in the rear. Bullets were whizzing over us. A Nazi tank was firing from the rear. Shrapnel whistled over our heads.

Petr Romanenko leaped out of the trench with a string of grenades and a Molotov cocktail and boldly crawled toward the enemy tank. He froze for a moment. I was afraid that he had been hit. But Petr, agile and fast, suddenly stood up and crouching close to the ground, zig-zagged to the tank. Then he raised his arm and threw the grenades under the track. An explosion rang out and the tank spun in place. Then the turret spun quickly and again opened fire. But Romanenko was close to the tank. He dashed and broke the bottle on the back of the enemy tank. Flames broke out. But then I saw our Petr Romanenko fall, cut down by a machine gun burst which came from the brush and caught him in the back. Gagarin and I fired desperately at the bushes. The tank burned evermore fiercely. With a roar, its turret along with the cannon flew into the air.

The feat of Petr Romanenko shook the officer candidates and when the command came from Lt Stepanov "Prepare to Attack," everyone was ready to get their hands on the Nazis in order to avenge the death of their comrade.

"Forward!" shouted Stepanov, jumping out of the trench. We rushed behind him. Next to me, firing on the move, ran Sergey Tryastsyn and Sasha Petrosyants. They helped me pull out the heavy "Maxim" when the wheels became stuck in the numerous ruts and holes.

In the heat of battle, Ramzayev fell right into the trench on a German officer. He pulled away and seized his pistol. But Sasha hit the Nazi on the arm with

the rifle butt and the bullet whizzed by. With the next blow he knocked the Nazi down. Having seized several German grenades on long handles, Sasha destroyed an enemy machine gun which was getting ready to fire. The rapid sortie by the officer candidates was successful. The ring of encirclement had been broken and we linked up with our own troops.

Toward evening battle ended. In summing up the results, Maj Shorin told us:

"The first company was truly the first and showed how we must hit the enemy. Glory and honor to the officer candidates of this company for their bravery in combat."

I looked at our commander. His face had literally grown sharper. You could more clearly see the white mark on it, the trace of an old wound. His head was bandaged but his eyes were calm.

"It was not easy for us to check the push of the Nazis," continued N. A. Shorin. "The enemy has been bringing up ever-new units, taking them away from other sectors. Now we, if it can so be said, are drawing the enemy fire on ourselves, we are attracting its attention and forces in order to allow the command to bring up reserves, to regroup the forces and dig in on new lines. Remember the entire nation and all the people are with us."

Thus, being unable to surmount the resistance of the border troops, the enemy, suffering heavy losses, on 21 August was forced to break off the attacks on our sector.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Voroshilovtsy" [Voroshilov Cadets], Moscow, Izd. Vysshego pogranichnogo voyenno-politicheskogo uchilishcha KGB SSSR imeni K. Ye. Voroshilova, 1980, p 43.

<sup>2</sup> I. G. Popov, "Batal'ony idut na zapad" [Battalions Moving West], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1977, pp 6-9.

<sup>3</sup> POGRANICHNIK, No 18, 1966, pp 63-64.

<sup>4</sup> Muzey pogranichnyy voysk [Museum of the Border Troops], document folio 1, box 351, file 15.

<sup>5</sup> LENINSKIY PUT' (newspaper of the 8th Army), 2 November 1941.

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# IMPROVEMENT OF LENINGRAD DEFENSES DURING BLOCKADE DESCRIBED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 84 (signed to press 27 Dec 83) pp 60-65

[Article by Engr-Col (Ret) A. Petrov: "In Leningrad"]

[Text] Appointment to a position. As ordered by the staff of the engineer troops of the Red Army on 3 November 1942, I was flying to Leningrad, the city of Russian glory and of famous architectural monuments, the birthplace of the revolution. One of the most beautiful cities in the world! Now it was in a ring of fire. Blockaded. The streets of Leningrad each day were fired on by artillery and subjected to bombing.

In the airplane I was the sole passenger among cargo crates. In the area of Volkhov, we landed at an airfield. I asked:

"What is the matter?"

The captain of the crew replied:

"Air battles are underway on the route of flight, in the area of Lake Ladoga. We must wait a bit."

We waited. An hour passed, and then a second. We were able to take off only at evening. We made it. We drove into the city around 2200 hours. It was dark. You needed sharp vision to find the road from the shafts of light hardly shining through the headlight slits.

We drove for 2 hours. Then the driver halted the vehicle and said:

"Sennaya Square. I can't go any farther. The area is under artillery shelling."

I headed into the first siding I came upon. Feeling my way along the wall, I reached a stairwell and sat down on a step. The sensation was not a pleasant one as shells were bursting quite near.

Finally the shelling stopped. I heard a voice on the stair landing:

"Is that you who just got out of the vehicle?"

"Yes," I replied. "I just flew in from Moscow. I have to get to 4 Sadovaya."

Two girls approached. They looked at me closely and asked for my papers. We introduced ourselves. Nadya and Katya worked at a plant but were on duty in the evenings. They led me to the temporary billeting quarters.

On the next day, I went over to the Engineer Directorate of the Leningrad Front. I introduced myself to the chief of staff, Col N. M. Pilipets.

"Well, the reinforcements have arrived," he said courteously. "The chief of the directorate is with the leadership and will be here shortly."

A little time passed. A major general came in. We stood up.

"Comrade Major General," said N. M. Pilipets, nodding toward me. "Reinforcements have arrived from Moscow."

"Good. Come on in."

I went into the office behind B. V. Bychevskiy. I reported. The general glanced at me and said:

"The front's military council has appointed the Brigade Commander A. A. Khodyrev as the chief of the Directorate for Defensive Construction. You are to be his deputy and chief engineer."

The front's commander, Lt Gen L. A. Govorov, had requested more work on improving the city's defensive system and more effective leadership over this work. Upon his proposal, the military council had handed down a decision on the partial mobilizing of the Leningraders for defensive work.

On 25 August 1942, the 29th Defensive Construction Directorate was formed and this included the 107th, 108th and 134th Military Field Construction Directorates, nine sections of military construction work and six construction columns, with a total of around 14,000 men.<sup>1</sup>

Getting acquainted and impressions. My work in the new position started by studying the forthcoming tasks. There was no experience or textbooks on fortifying a large city which was in a ring of a blockade. We had to find out everything ourselves. The situation demanded a rapid and at the same time creative approach to solving the problems. At times, bold and risky decisions had to be taken. An individual approach was required to the equipping of each boulevard, street and sometimes individual house. The mission was to make the enemy's first step into the city limits his last.

Upon becoming acquainted with the personnel of the directorate, I was struck by a certain slowness of the people. Several days later, I myself began to feel that it was also becoming hard to make abrupt, sharp movements. This was explained by an insufficient caloric content in the food. Although we were fed according to the second priority category, the need to eat something did not leave us.

In the quarters where the directorate was located, several days prior to my arrival an exploding bomb had shattered the corner. All three floors had to be covered with canvass. The drafts were reduced but the temperature was the same both inside and outside. The water and sewage were not working and no electric light was provided. Water for preparing food and drinking was brought in from Pargolovo. We had to work using the light of alkali lamps and three kerosene lamps were burning in the technical section for the draftsmen.

The viewing of the city also left an oppressive impression. The streets were deserted. A majority of the houses stood uninhabited. The glass had been knocked out of the windows, and the empty openings had been covered with blankets or closed off with plywood. On the walls of the buildings were the reminders: "This side is subjected to artillery shelling." The cupolas of the cathedrals, the spires of the Engineer Castle and the Peter and Paul Fortress had been covered in grey paint while the monuments had been boarded up, covered with sandbags or banked with dirt. Everything was camouflaged. The boulevards such as Moskovskiy, Stachek and Ligovskiy were blocked with dragons' teeth and tetrahedrons. Barricades were everywhere. The cellars and the first floors of the buildings (particularly corner ones) had been turned into pillboxes. Barrage balloons were in the skies. You could feel that the city was part of the front line. Each inhabitant made his contribution to creating an inaccessible fortress on the Neva. The Leningraders produced or repaired weapons and combat equipment, they made uniforms and improved the engineer facilities.

Preparing to break the blockade. In carrying out the demands of the front's command, we built shelters for the artillery units, dumps for shells, dugouts for the personnel, we deepened the trenches and strengthened the previously-built artillery and machine gun "implacements" and built new ones.... An "implacement" meant scores of cubic meters of sand, rock, tons of metal and cubic meters of lumber.

In the course of preparing to break through the blockade, we were ordered to build a range on the Karelian Isthmus and erect several machine gun nests, artillery positions, shelters and dugouts at it. At the end of November, the commander of the front's artillery, Maj Gen G. F. Odintsov, received orders to train the artillery troops in destroying the structures which we had built by cannon fire. We watched this shelling. The artillery troops worked very hard but the construction workers had been conscientious. There, on the range, we had built a full-scale model of a section of the Nazi defenses. Here our troops worked on the methods of taking the enemy defensive works.

At the beginning of January, I was summoned by Maj Gen B. V. Bychevskiy and ordered:

"Report proposals on the ferrying of tanks under winter conditions."

On this question we found nothing in the technical literature. The experience of crossing the tanks along the bottom using cables had not proven effective. Crossing on rafts with the preliminary blowing up of the ice was ineffective and did not ensure camouflaging. There remained one variation, namely to set up the crossing over the ice by reinforcing it. We felt it was possible to carry out this task. In each track we had to lay four wooden beams 15 x 15 cm and



then bolt them together. For the fastest freezing up of them in the ice, every 4 m we drilled openings in the beams and in the ice and then inserted pins in them (lengths of pipe 50 mm in diameter).

When we had finished drawing a sketch of the crossing, B. V. Bychevskiy decided to show it to L. A. Govorov. Mar SU K. Ye. Voroshilov who was present at the briefing, having looked over the drawing, voiced a desire to actually test the proposed plan. A decision was taken to work the drawing up to a working plan and turn it over to the commander of a pontoon battalion.

On the next day in the evening a battalion arrived in the area of Saratovskaya Colony, where they began to build the crossing. During the day at Pargolovo, our construction detachment had procured the wooden beams, the pins and bolts. I estimated that during the night the beams would freeze in the ice and that the sleeper would freeze solid to it.

By morning the crossing was ready. But the weather changed sharply. A wind blew off the Gulf of Finland and the water did not freeze on the ice. The tanks moved up. Arriving with them were the commander of the armored troops of the Leningrad Front, Maj Gen V. I. Baranov, Col N. M. Pilipets, the commander of the engineer brigade Col A. K. Akatov and several minutes later, Lt Gen L. A. Govorov and Mar K. Ye. Voroshilov. Leonid Aleksandrovich [Govorov] as was his custom greeted us with a slight nod of the head. But Kliment Yefremovich [Voroshilov] shook hands with everyone present.

The last preparations. The instructions to the drivers were: "Keep the machine running smoothly, without jerks, and the hatches open." A T-60 tank was the first out on the ice. It made it to the opposite shore and then turned back. There were no deformations in our track.

Then a T-34 moved slowly out onto the ice. Behind it came K. Ye. Voroshilov, L. A. Govorov, B. I. Baranov and B. V. Bychevskiy. I walked a little in front, carefully watching the crossing.

Having moved around 150 m away from the bank, the tank stopped for a second and then moved forward with a jerk. The ice cracked. The track shifted and the combat vehicle rumbling and filling with water, slipped under the ice.

Several alarming seconds passed. I heard the voice of K. Ye. Voroshilov:

"The tank? The devil take it! We will make a new one! Pity about the driver!"

And just then the head of the driver wearing the headset appeared from under the ice. Everyone rushed toward him and pulled him up on the ice.

What was the reason for the catastrophe? A thaw? A dynamic shock? Possibly, both factors together had their effect.

The more we thought about this the more firmly we were convinced that in a heavy frost the design should work.

Several days later the tank was pulled out. We built a new crossing of the same design. Only this time the weather favored us. The new testing was carried out successfully. We prepared intensely to set up four crossings, we began preparing the beams, pins and ladders and made fascines.

In the area of the forest near the crossing under construction during the first days of January, the artillery was secretly moved up and the strictest camouflaging observed. Any daytime movement was categorically prohibited.

The breakthrough started on the morning of 12 January 1943. Simultaneously hundreds of guns began to work the opposite side of the Neva. From somewhere you could hear the sounds of a band performing the "International." Accompanied by this, the men of the 136th Rifle Division of Maj Gen N. P. Simonyak went down onto the ice and their first ranks in a single rush reached the left bank. The men ran in felt boots, padded trousers and jackets, carrying their own automatics, strings of grenades and assault ladders.

The offensive was carried out along the entire front. Each man performed his combat mission. Information was received that the men of the 106th Combat Engineer Battalion had cut passages through the minefields and along with the infantrymen had engaged in hand-to-hand combat. One of the company commanders was put out of action and his place was taken by the young lieutenant, N. N. Badayev. Under his leadership the company captured an enemy observation post and took a staff officer prisoner.

Fighting was underway on the left bank while on the right the combat engineers stood idle. They realized that the infantry needed tanks but permission for building the crossing had not been given. Only darkness allowed us to begin putting up the crossing. We waited for this. It began to grow dark. The pontoon troops began laying the wooden beams accurately and smoothly and to fasten them to the ice. It took 2 hours for the pipes connecting the beam to the ice to freeze solid. The strong frost worked in our favor. Before our very eyes the track structure was turned to stone. Finally, the first tank went down slowly onto the ice. Everyone held his breath. How would the crossing work? But then the tank was already on the left bank. It had crossed! We breathed easier. After the first came a second and a third. The ice sagged but still held the heavy load.

After the 15th tank had crossed, the sag had increased. Cracks had appeared. Water had come up. As we could see the ice was "tired." It had to be given a short rest and the water allowed to freeze. Then we used the alternate crossing and later the basic one again. The tanks crossed one after another without delay.

The "Neva" and "Izhora." On 6 April 1943, A. A. Khodyrev and I were summoned to B. V. Bychevskiy. He informed us of a decision of the military council to build a command post for the Leningrad Front within the city limits. The working out of the plans and the construction work were assigned to our directorate.

I called in the engineers from the technical section headed by its chief, Engr-Maj Z. I. Braude, the chief of the first section, Engr-Maj N. N. Lapushanskiy

as well as the chief of the planning section, Engr-Maj L. I. Berezanskiy. I briefed them on the contents of the received mission. The installation was to be underground and protected against a direct hit by a 500-kg bomb and perfectly camouflaged. The construction time was 5 months.

I turned to those present:

"You have until the morning of the day after tomorrow. We will examine your proposals at 1000 hours."

I armed myself with a pencil and paper and began to figure out how to carry out construction. The tunnel method was a very labor intensive undertaking and under the conditions of the blockade there would not be the necessary mechanisms. It was possible to build by the open pit method but the level of the Leningrad ground water would not make it possible to dig a pit 15-20 m deep without sinking pilings around the entire perimeter. A new method had to be found. We chose the caisson method. I drew out a sketch. With a diameter of 16-18 m, such a cylinder well would make it possible to locate 6-8 working quarters inside. Of course, one such structure would not be enough to quarter the entire staff of the front. Several such installations had to be built and then connected by communication passageways.

In the morning, when the comrades had assembled, I briefly told them about the proposed construction variation. They all approved it. We decided to immediately begin drawing up the plans. Some prepared calculations for the structures and others the layout and design of the interiors. We also called in specialists including an electrician, a hydraulic technician as well as ones for communications and camouflage. By 11 April, in the stage of the technical plans, the materials had been prepared for reporting to the front's command. We had to design 12 structures for housing the staff of the front, the communications center and the power plant. Each of these in design terms looked as follows: a cylinder 13.5 m in diameter, 5-6 m high and with a wall thickness of 20 cm was to be sunk to a depth of 15 m; the walls of the cylinder would be built up as the cylinder was sunk. For reducing the friction in lowering, the outside walls of the cylinder would be lubricated with a liquid clay solution. Then we would proceed as follows. Upon reaching the planned depth, the base would be leveled out and when necessary strengthened with rubble stone and then a 40-cm reinforced concrete layer would be poured for the bottom. On the walls and bottom of the cylinder we would apply a waterproofing layer (4-5 layers of sacking soaked in hot asphalt) and then the walls and floor would be lined with asphalt-soaked planks, the inner decking would be installed and the concrete poured.<sup>2</sup>

During the laying of the floor and until the end of the concrete pouring, the pressure of the ground water was to be reduced by pumping. After this, the structure would be covered with a 2.5-m layer of sand. On this we would lay a reinforced concrete pad 2 m thick and 30 m in diameter. The pad would be covered by a layer of earth and then the necessary camouflaging would be made. Proceeding from its conditions, over certain structures cottages would be built and these would be adapted for actual use. The cottages would be connected with the basic structure by an inner circular stairway.

Each structure had an individual water supply, sewage, antichemical protection and an air recovery system, ventilation, heating, communications and a triple back-up electric power system.

I reported on the plans to the member of the Politburo of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee, the secretary of the Leningrad gorkom and obkom, and member of the Military Council of the Leningrad Front, A. A. Zhdanov.

After my report, A. A. Zhdanov stood up behind his desk and turning to me, said:

"Fine, we assign you, as the author, to head up this construction. Comrade Bychevskiy, draw up an order appointing Comrade Petrov as the chief of construction. What code name have you given the construction?"

"'Neva'," replied B. V. Bychevskiy.

"Then make Comrade Petrov the chief of construction of 'Neva.' I wish you success!"

Without any delay we worked out the structure of the new construction administration, its personnel, as well as the need for materials, transport and human resources.

The project did not promise a quiet life. The enormous responsibility and maximum short times meant sleepless nights and a straining of every nerve. Work had to be started up immediately without any preliminary preparation....

The construction started on 14 April was picking up pace with work going on around the clock. The average daily number of persons employed in construction was around 3,500 persons. On 2 May the Central Concrete Plant delivered the first concrete. Soon thereafter we began to lay the concrete for the caissons. Everything was going normally and strictly by schedule.

The workers were enthusiastic. The general desire was to complete the work on time without forgetting high quality. There were hitches but as a whole, the plan was carried out.

In June, the commander of the front ordered the construction of several permanent emplacements and a concrete belt in the defensive areas of the 42d and 55th Armies under the code name "Izhora." A total of 119 structures were built. They played a major role in defending the city against enemy attack and in lifting the blockade.

The command of the front gave a great deal of attention to the construction of the "Neva" and "Izhora" projects. One of them which was part of the system of the reinforced concrete belt, in the area of Sredne-Rogatka, was visited by Col Gen L. A. Govorov (the new military rank was awarded him on 15 April 1943) and the secretary of the Leningrad party gorkom and member of the front's military council, A. A. Kuznetsov.

The brigade leader Golovleva reported to the commander of the front:

"On the project all work is being carried out strictly according to schedule. Some 28 carpenters are at work. There are no combat losses." "Are women carpenters?" asked L. A. Govorov in amazement.

"They are capenters, comrade commander!"

"Who dug this pit?"

"We did."

"And who will pour the concrete?"

"We will, comrade commander," said Golovleva smiling....

In leaving the site, A. A. Kuznetsov said, turning to us:

"Here is the lot of the Leningraders. And what vital force in them! Remember what the poet wrote: 'If nails could be made from these people, there would be no stronger nails in the world!'"

"There is little poetry in their work," replied L. A. Govorov gloomily. "The girls must be protected against artillery fire. Give some thought to that, Comrade Bychevskiy."

At the end of October, construction was fully completed. We had finished all the projects on time. The command praised their quality highly. From the construction directorate alone, 28 engineers and technicians received governmental decorations. Many officers and soldiers were awarded decorations. Soon thereafter, the engineers and technicians involved in the project were sent back to their former jobs. And I returned to the directorate at No 4 Sadovaya.

The memory of the previous heroic days is recalled by a marble plaque by the entrance to the building where our directorate was located with the words: "In this building in 1941-1945, was located the Directorate of Defensive Construction for the Leningrad Front."

The carrying out of engineer work to defend the city was possible due to the enormous aid and constant concern from the rayon party committees, the city committee and Andrey Aleksandrovich Zhdanov personally. During those years he frequently said: "Eighty percent of our efforts should go into engineer support for the city defenses."

The secretary of the Leningrad party gorkom and member of the front's military council, A. A. Kuznetsov, was a sort of curator of construction. Being up on all matters of the city's defense, he visited many construction sites, by his words he instilled confidence that seemingly unsolvable questions would be resolved and provided inestimable aid to the construction workers.

Leningrad the fortress! It has stood on the banks of the Neva and will stand eternally, confirming the greatness and might of the Soviet fatherland.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 30001, inv. 1, file 373, sheet 5.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, files 320, 373, 388, 395, 405.

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## EFFECT OF LOCAL WARS ON U.S. ARMED FORCES ORGANIZATION TRACED

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[Article by Candidate of Military Sciences, Lt Gen S. Berkutov: "The Influence of the Experience of Local Wars on the Organizational Development of the U.S. Armed Forces"]

[Text] After World War II, imperialism, particularly American, in endeavoring to alter the balance of forces on the world scene in its favor, more and more often began to resort to outright armed violence. The United States and its allies over this time initiated and conducted around 150 local wars and military conflicts.<sup>1</sup> Among the largest of these were the aggressive U.S. wars in Korea and Southeast Asia as well as that of Israel against the Arab nations in the Near East.

The given article will examine only certain problems of the organizational development of the U.S. Armed Forces which to one degree or another were influenced by the experience of the designated wars.

In local wars, the U.S. leadership, along with the achieving of political goals, was purposefully testing out a number of concepts of military doctrine on the level of improving the organizational development of its armed forces and preparing them for aggression against the Soviet Union and the socialist commonwealth countries.

In the opinion of foreign military specialists, an analysis of the combat results of the U.S. Armed Forces in local wars made it possible for the American Command to disclose their strong and weak points and to draw definite conclusions on the role and place of the Armed Services and the branches of troops in a modern war employing conventional weapons. This applies primarily to changes in the organization and establishment, the balancing of the Armed Services, their equipping, the organization of support and command for the armed forces as well as to changes in the basing system of the navy and aviation, the training of reserves and mobilization supplies, to manning and the operational-combat training of the troops.

The massed employment of all the Armed Services in the local wars in Korea and Southeast Asia showed a constant trend for raising the role and place of the



general purpose forces<sup>2</sup> in the overall structure of the U.S. Armed Forces. Thus, the total number of divisions of the regular army, marines and organized reserves of the general purpose forces increased by 66 percent in 1968 in comparison with 1950. A definite balancing was also noticed in growth for the other Armed Services (see the Table).

Table

Increase in Number of Personnel in U.S. Regular Troops

Period	Number of Armed Forces	I n c l u d i n g		
		Ground Forces	Navy	Air Force
1950 before Korean War	1,460,000	593,000	456,000	411,000
1952 at peak of Korean War	3,635,000	1,596,000	1,056,000	983,000
1964 before Vietnam War	2,688,000	973,000	858,000	857,000
1968 at peak of Vietnam War	3,547,000	1,570,000	1,072,000	905,000

The U.S. imperialist circles, proceeding from the adopted strategy of a "direct confrontation," are intensely preparing to unleash any types of wars from all-out nuclear to conventional war in a theater of war. In this context, in the estimate of foreign military observers, in the near future one can expect a further increase in the numerical and fighting strength of the U.S. Armed Forces basically by the development of the general purpose forces.

As a result of the extended local wars in Korea and Southeast Asia, regardless of the limited scale of military operations, the U.S. Armed Forces felt an acute shortage of trained reserve. The U.S. Command in this regard was forced to reduce the time for training reserve units and formations from 6 to 2 months. The reorganization of the reserve components led to a quantitative and qualitative change in their composition. According to the old structure, the organized army reserves had 37 divisions and 3 separate brigades with a manning rate up to 55 percent, while according to the new one there would be 8 full-strength divisions and 21 separate brigades with a manning rate of 93 percent. The total number of organized reserves was set at 660,000, and in the army reserves 260,000. The number of organized reserves was also set for the air force and navy. The operational readiness of many formations and units in the organized reserve was brought up to the level of the regular troops.

The tendency for a constant rise in the combat readiness of all the reserve components in the U.S. Armed Forces is also noticeable at present. Their number is over 913,000 men.<sup>3</sup> In the estimate of American strategists, such organized reserves best meet the demands of employing the U.S. Armed Forces not only in a limited war but also an all-out one.

The experience of the local wars in Korea and Vietnam showed that in modern wars, due to the use of complex weapons and combat equipment, diverse electronic systems, instruments and equipment, it is essential to have the corresponding

personnel for servicing these. The rapidly changing situation, the significant losses, the extremely short time for mastering new equipment and weapons as well as the necessity of periodically replacing the personnel in the course of combat created difficulties in manning the units in a combat zone. The war showed that persons inducted into the army under a draft law did not meet the given requirements. Here the chief criterion was the development level of the inductees. In the course of the war in Vietnam, there was a tendency for a decline in the percentage of persons whose mental development was average or above average called up for military service. Thus, in 1968, out of the total number of inductees, the share of above-average draftees was 38 percent, for average-level 38 percent and for below-average 24 percent. The Command of the U.S. Armed Forces in 1973 was forced, considering the dangerous consequences of the shortfall of the necessary contingents of specialists in the troops, to shift over to a principle of manning with volunteers. The U.S. Armed Forces thus actually became mercenaries. Here it is considered that under present-day conditions, the manning of the armed forces with highly skilled specialists is becoming evermore complicated, since there is an on-going process of a further improvement in the weapons systems and combat equipment.

The experience of the local wars has shown the growing role of the moral factor. From the example of the major local wars initiated by American imperialism in Korea and Indochina, it can be seen how the military and technical superiority of the U.S. Army was nullified by the moral-political superiority of the national patriotic forces. This circumstance has also forced the U.S. ruling circles to switch to using formations manned by mercenaries and to involve in the local wars as large a number of officer and NCO as possible in the aim of giving them combat experience. Thus, the Pentagon leadership as a minimum sent to Vietnam once some 73 percent of all the colonels, 83 percent of the majors and 85 percent of the sergeants in the U.S. Army for gaining combat experience.<sup>4</sup>

At the initial stage of the aggressive local wars in Korea and Southeast Asia there was a constant trend for the command of the U.S. Armed Forces to employ the most mobile assault formations and units of the navy, air force and ground forces (attack carriers, marines, tactical and strategic aviation, light formations and units of the ground forces) as rapid deployment forces in distant theaters of war. The actions of these forces had a surprise nature. The plan was for a powerful initial strike.

In 1980, the U.S. leadership for supporting its aggressive foreign policy aspirations established a special command of the Rapid Deployment Forces with a total size of 200,000 men in the regular forces and 100,000 reservists.<sup>5</sup> Mobile formations and units from all the Armed Services were assigned to them.

In the course of the war in Southeast Asia, the American Command established an extensive regional joint system of troop command and control as a component of the global strategic system for the command and control of the U.S. Armed Forces. This was the most extensive of all the regional systems and was considered an operational-strategic one. Short-wave, tropospheric, cable and satellite systems were its main means of communications. In Southeast Asia, a satellite communications subsystem was established for ensuring dependable communications with the troops and military bases. The extensive use of earth

satellites for military purposes was the most promising in comparison with other means of communications.

For troop command and control in a combat zone, a number of combined automatic systems was established and tested. These marked a beginning to the development and further improving of such systems for the control of tactical aviation and air defenses, tactical shipments, the supplying of materials and equipment to the combat zone and have subsequently undergone extensive development in the U.S. Armed Forces and the NATO Joint Armed Forces.

The remoteness of the combat areas some 10,000-16,000 km away from the supply bases on the continental United States, even in the absence of enemy counteractions on the sea and air lines of communications, created a number of difficult problems in organizing operational-strategic troop and cargo shipments to the theater of war. We have merely to point out that the volume of personnel air shipments in both directions reached 5 million persons during the wars in Korea and Vietnam, while sea cargo shipments were, respectively, 73 and 80 million tons, including up to 30 percent in oil products.

Around 750 transport planes were engaged in air shipments from the United States to Korea, over 900 aircraft in Southeast Asia and for sea shipments, respectively, 570 and 400 ships and vessels.

In the course of both wars, there was an improvement in the facilities for air and sea shipments. This was expressed in a fundamental reorganization of the naval transport service and the converting of it into the Maritime Shipment Command while the Military Air Transport Service became the Military Air Transport Command and the equipping of them with new high-speed, large capacity means of transport. Both commands have begun to be utilized centrally in the interests of all the Armed Services. The increase in the means of strategic transport in the U.S. Armed Forces is continuing at present. One has merely to point out that the aircraft fleet which would be employed in the strategic shipments from the continental United States to distant theaters of war is being constantly modernized and includes around 1,000 transport planes and helicopters. For these purposes over 400 reserve aircraft can be used from the civil airlines as well as 350 military transports of the Air Force Reserve. In addition to the existing facilities, there are plans to turn over to the Maritime Air Transport Command up to 750 vessels of the reserve national defense and maritime fleet.<sup>6</sup>

According to the data in the foreign press, on the basis of the experience of the war in Southeast Asia, the U.S. Defense Department has worked out a new plan for mobilizing the maritime fleet in the event of the outbreak of any scale of wars. The appropriate measures have been taken to strengthen the quantitative and qualitative indicators of the strategic means of transport and special demands have been placed on the tactical and technical indicators for the air and sea transport facilities. Correspondingly there has been a change in both the organization and establishment as well as in the training of reserve components of the armed forces while plans have been worked out for several types of mobilization measures depending upon the "level of the threat."

For generalizing the experience of local wars, the Command of the U.S. Armed Forces even during the war in Southeast Asia reorganized the Command for Scientific Research on the Organization and Employment of the Ground Forces into the Command for Training and Scientific Research on the Organizational Development of the Ground Forces with the task of working out programs for improving their organization, weapons and combat equipment for the period up to the 1990's. Considering the experience of combat in the local wars, in the U.S. Armed Forces many field manuals and regulations have been reworked and published. Much space has been given to reworking the training programs for the training of personnel for the armed forces as a whole.

In the training of the U.S. Armed Forces one can also note a tendency to increase the number of all sorts of exercises in the aim of preparing the staffs and the troops for actions in remote theaters of war under various conditions of a combat situation. Among the largest of these we must put: the autumn exercises of the NATO Joint Armed Forces "Autumn Forge," the command-staff exercises such as "Zima" [ ? Winter], "Reforger" to develop the ferrying of troops and equipment from the continental United States to Europe and for organizing large-scale combat in the European theater of war; the joint American-South Korea "Team Spirit" exercises conducted against the background of repelling aggression from the north; the exercises of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Atlantic "Solid Shield" aimed at preparing to defeat "aggressor" troops who invade the territory of a state friendly to the United States in Latin America; the exercise of the Rapid Deployment Forces conducted in the interest of their learning about the Near Eastern Theater of War and many others. The designated measures are ultimately the preparation of the U.S. Armed Forces for conducting both limited and all-out war against the Soviet Union and the socialist commonwealth nations.

In the course of the Vietnam War as well as in the Arab-Israeli wars, there has been the extensive use of electronic combat equipment. On the basis of the experience acquired in the armed forces of the United States and other nations, one can note a tendency for the accelerated development of this equipment.

The use of the electronic spectrum has led to the rise of a new type of combat, electronic combat. In the opinion of Western military specialists, in the future the belligerents will conduct a struggle of unprecedented scale and intensity against the enemy means of controlling the troops and weapons. The last wars in the Near East and the Anglo-Argentine conflict showed the enormous results of electronic combat primarily in detecting warning and weapons control electronic equipment with their subsequent knocking out and electronic neutralization. In this regard the United States has begun to modernize the existing electronic combat equipment as well as develop new. Beginning in 1969, the Pentagon has annually allocated 400 million dollars for the development and production of electronic countermeasures equipment and since 1975 these expenditures have increased up to 600 million dollars a year.<sup>7</sup> Here the U.S. military leadership feels that such expenditures are recovered by reducing the losses in combat equipment. The organizational structure of the special units is also being improved. New electronic combat equipment both for individual and collective use is being introduced.

American imperialism, in unleashing local wars, has turned the territories of the nations subjected to aggression into enormous testing ranges for weapons and combat equipment in service and for those being developed. In the course of the extended war in Southeast Asia, the American Command established that if several Armed Services carried out a certain mission, then, with other conditions being equal, they should use the same weapons and supplies. For this reason, American specialists feel that the designing and development of weapons and combat equipment from the very start should be carried out proceeding from the tasks of the armed forces as a whole and not an individual service. Here, in all instances, it is essential to consider, they note, the different conditions for the combat employment of the weapons. In their estimate, this ultimately will help to significantly reduce expenditures on the development of the weapons and to increase their effectiveness in a combat situation. After the local wars in Southeast Asia and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, in the armed forces of the United States and the leading NATO countries there was a tendency for extensive standardization and unification of the weapons and combat equipment. Here the goal was pursued of introducing predominantly America-produced systems and models.

In recent years, the troops have been equipped with new weapons systems and types. Among these one must put the long-range, high-precision weapons, ammunition with increased explosive power, more advanced airplanes, helicopters, armored equipment, antitank weapons, reconnaissance and electronic combat equipment, integrated automated troop and weapons control systems. The regular and under-development weapons continue to be improved in the direction of increasing fire power, range, mobility, universality of use in combat, reliability and simplicity of maintenance.

The experience of the aggressive local wars of imperialism in Korea, Southeast Asia as well as in the Near East has had a substantial impact on the organizational development of each service and type of troops in the U.S. Armed Forces.

In the Ground Forces, the organizational structure of the formations and units has been improved, they have continued to be supplied with new weapons and combat equipment and the views on the employment of the branches of troops in modern combat have been tested out. Proceeding from experience and the need for ground forces in the main theater of war in Europe as well as considering the possible conduct of wars in other theaters of war, the U.S. armored and mechanized divisions have been increased in size and have been strengthened with a significant number of tanks, antitank and antiaircraft weapons. This has substantially increased their combat capability.<sup>8</sup> U.S. military specialists feel that the new divisions in terms of maneuverability, strike and fire power have a 10-fold superiority in comparison with the American infantry divisions and a 5-fold one in comparison with an armored division from the beginning of the 1950's.

In the course of the war in Vietnam, there was a tendency for the massed saturation of the U.S. Ground Forces with helicopters and army air planes and these gave them tactical mobility and increased strike and fire power on the battlefield. Two aeromobile divisions equipped with helicopters were organized for operations in little-equipped theaters of war. Helicopters have become one of the basic means of combating enemy tanks. The experience of the Arab-Israeli War in October 1973 clearly confirmed this view.

Later on the aeromobile divisions were broken up and in their place air assault ones were established. These were superior in strike and fire power and were capable of fighting under any conditions in overseas theaters of war.

Considering the acquired experience and the demands of modern military doctrine, the U.S. leadership continues to improve the organizational structure of the ground forces formations and units. In particular, there are plans to create a new "division-86" ("heavy" and "light"). They intend to convert all the armored and mechanized divisions basically designed for the European theaters of war to the TOE of a "heavy" division while the airborne, air assault and infantry divisions for use chiefly in poorly equipped theaters of war will be converted to the TOE of the "light" divisions.

In the organizational development of the U.S. Ground Forces, along with improving the nuclear missile weapons, there are plans to further increase the combat capabilities of the formations and units by the number and quality of the tank fleet, antitank weapons and troop air defense.

On the basis of the experience gained, the leading direction in the organizational development of the Air Force has been a rise in its combat capability by replacing the aircraft fleet, modernizing the equipment, introducing guided weapons and improving the control systems.

As a consequence of the effectiveness of the ground air defense weapons as was demonstrated in the Near East it has been necessary to take further measures to increase the capabilities of tactical aviation to neutralize enemy air defense weapons.

In local wars there has been a need to develop as part of the Air Force weapons system with increased probability of hitting the target with a single round or attack and this has greatly increased the combat capabilities of aviation. In the course of the local wars in Vietnam and the Near East, they have started the trials and combat testing of guided bombs and antiradar guided missiles with which the aviation, in remaining outside the range of air defenses, can attack both the air defenses and the installations covered by them. It has been necessary to balance the ratio in tactical aviation between fighters and ground attack planes in the aim of more effectively employing them in the course of the war.

The experience of local wars has shown that stationary ground observation and warning systems are extremely vulnerable. Set up on the ground, they have limited capability to detect low-flying targets over enemy territory. They can also be influenced by electronic combat equipment and this significantly reduces their effectiveness. For eliminating these shortcomings, the AWACS airborne warning and air control system was specially developed. Its individual elements were worked out by the American Command in the course of the war in Vietnam. The AWACS system is capable of detecting enemy targets in the entire range of flight altitudes and exchange operational data between the air defenses and tactical aviation in armed conflicts of various scales.<sup>9</sup> On the basis of the experience of the local wars, the United States is continuing large-scale development of the new PLSS airborne system for the precise determining of target coordinates and guiding the tactical air weapons under any weather



conditions and a difficult radioelectronic situation. Its prototype the ALSS was tested out in Vietnam.

It should be pointed out that local wars have not had a marked influence on the organizational structure of the Air Force. However, they have contributed to the further modernization and to increasing the combat capabilities of aviation. They have allowed the U.S. Air Force command to test out various concepts on employing aviation under the conditions of limited wars, to introduce necessary changes in the principles of its organizational development, equipping and combat employment as well as clarify views on the place and role of the branches of aviation in a war and the prospects of their development.

In the course of the local wars, the American command has tested out views on the use of the diverse naval forces, the effectiveness of weapons and combat equipment, the organizing of logistics, the organization and establishment of the naval formations and units as well as the system of their command and control. The U.S. armed aggressions in Korea and Vietnam showed that the carrier strike forces as forward floating air bases in any types of wars are of very important significance. The operational flexibility inherent to carriers makes it possible for them to reinforce the capabilities of the tactical air forces in making air strikes, particularly in the initial period of a conflict. The marines in being employed as the first wave in deploying a grouping of ground forces are characterized by aeromobility, flexibility and high strike power.

While previously the basic classes of surface vessels, except for carriers, were viewed primarily as defensive means, in the course of the local wars the possibility has arisen of conducting offensive actions with them. This experience has undergone further development in all the navies of the world's basic capitalist states. The outfitting of surface vessels with guided missiles and other modern weapons systems has altered their role and place in the general structure of the navy. The number of air defense and ASW ships has increased significantly, while the amphibious forces designed to support amphibious landings have been improved and strengthened. At present, the U.S. Navy, for purposes of intimidation, constantly keeps marine subunits on board ships in the Mediterranean, the Indian and Pacific Oceans as well as in the Caribbean.

Many foreign military specialists have pointed out that after World War II of all the Armed Services the navy most fully incorporated the experience of the local wars, as in the postwar years it has developed under the direct influence of the aggressive interventionist policy of imperialism which demanded the development of the navy as the unique means of military expansion.

American military theoreticians feel that the resources of the Navy deployed in forward zones will play a very important role in non-nuclear deterrence. For this reason these most important factors should be taken into account in the development of the navy. A policy of dispatching a large number of ships based in the United States to vast areas over definite intervals of time, in their view, is more effective than a policy of fixed levels of presence. In their opinion, the U.S. Navy should be constantly ready to immediately influence the development of the situation in crisis areas by a military presence and a policy of deterrence in order to ensure a strong position for possible combat in the event of the outbreak of wars of varying scale.



In conclusion, it is essential to emphasize that the U.S. military-political leadership is most seriously studying and analyzing the lessons of the local wars and is drawing the appropriate conclusions from them. The acquired experience is being considered by them primarily in the plans for preparing the armed forces to wage war against the Soviet Union and the socialist commonwealth countries as a whole.

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 4, 1983, p 10.
- <sup>2</sup> In the U.S. Armed Forces, the general purpose forces include the Ground Forces, the Air Force Tactical Aviation and the Navy without the nuclear missile subs. ("Otkuda iskhodit ugroza miru" [From Whence the Threat to Peace Derives], 2d Supplemented Edition, Moscow, Voenizdat, 1982, p 22).
- <sup>3</sup> "Otkuda iskhodit ugroza....," pp 18-19.
- <sup>4</sup> "Lokal'nyye voyny. Istoriya i sovremennost'" [Local Wars. History and Modern Times], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1981, p 262.
- <sup>5</sup> "Otkuda iskhodit ugroza....," p 25.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., p 29.
- <sup>7</sup> "Lokal'nyye voyny....," pp 237-238.
- <sup>8</sup> See: ZARUBEZHNOYE VOYENNOYE OBOZRENIYE, No 3, 1978, pp 25-33.
- <sup>9</sup> See ibid., No 6, 1981, pp 46-50.

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## DEVELOPMENT OF NATO JOINT ARMED FORCES REVIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 84 (signed to press 27 Dec 83) pp 74-81

[Article by Col Gen V. Meshcheryakov: "Basic Stages in the Development of the NATO Joint Armed Forces"]

[Text] Collaboration during World War II between nations with different socio-economic systems confirmed the correctness of V. I. Lenin's conclusion on the possibility of peaceful coexistence between socialism and capitalism. History has shown that states with different political systems can coexist successfully and fruitfully with one another not only under peacetime conditions but also in the course of an armed struggle against a common enemy which represented a threat to all mankind. German Naziism was defeated precisely by the joint efforts of the anti-Hitler coalition. Seemingly after the victory in World War II, the states of the anti-Hitler coalition would have had objective opportunities for further collaboration. The basis for this was the decisions of the Tehran, Yalta and particularly the Potsdam Conferences for the heads of state of the USSR, United States and Great Britain and to which France subsequently joined. These established a common policy on the German question for the postwar years. The prospects of European security and the excluding of a new world war were opened.

However, in flaunting its nuclear might, the United States endeavored to impose its will on the entire world. Even during the period of the 1945 Potsdam Conference, the U.S. President Truman began to blackmail the Soviet Union with the presence of a superpowerful weapon. The former British Prime Minister W. Churchill, one of the heads of international anti-Sovietism who began the Cold War acted in concert with Truman on 5 March 1946 in a speech at Fulton, Missouri. This was a turning point from a policy of collaboration to a policy of increasing tension. W. Churchill proclaimed a "crusade" against the Eastern European states which had set out on a path of socialist development. For the first time since World War II his speech leveled accusations about the "aggressiveness of the Soviet Union" which subsequently became standard phrases and the "threat from the East" was mentioned.

The next step in the heating up of the Cold War was the "Truman Doctrine" (1947) which proclaimed the "right" of the United States to intervene into the internal affairs of any country if the "threat of communism" hung over it. In

1948, the United States and the Western European states set out on a policy of concluding military blocs against the USSR and the other socialist states.

In March 1948, a treaty was signed in Brussels for establishing the "Western Alliance" military bloc consisting of Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. The new bloc received the complete support of Washington. In July 1948, the United States and Canada joined the "Western Alliance." It must be pointed out that immediately after its organization, they began forming "mobile forces" consisting of 23 divisions with Great Britain providing 5, France 15 and Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg one each. The nations of the "Western Alliance" pushed by the United States set out to accelerate military preparations, having increased their military expenditures by over 2-fold.

On 4 April 1949, upon the initiative of the U.S. government, a treaty was signed in Washington for setting up the basic military-political grouping of imperialism, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) which initially included 12 states (United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Iceland, Denmark, Luxembourg, Italy and Portugal). In 1952, Greece and Turkey joined this alliance, West Germany in 1955 and Spain in 1982.

Thus, the United States which was the initiator of establishing the North Atlantic Military Bloc directed against the USSR and the European People's Democracies had departed fully from the principles of coordinated, mutually advantageous collaboration with the Soviet Union and had set out on a path of direct confrontation. The purpose of the organizers of this bloc was to create a superiority of forces on the NATO side, to use the American nuclear monopoly, to impose their will on the USSR and threaten it up to the point of employing military force.

In establishing the North Atlantic Military Bloc, the United States viewed Western Europe as an appendage to its nuclear potential and as a staging area for locating military bases around the Soviet Union and the young People's Democracies which had chosen a socialist path of development. Certainly, the change in U.S. and British policy was nothing new or unexpected for the USSR. The Soviet Union proceeded from the view that the imperialist states were the class enemies of socialism and for this reason an abrupt change in their policy toward militarism and aggression could not be excluded.

The development of the NATO Joint Armed Forces [JAF] can be divided into four basic stages.

In the first stage (1949-1955), the American military strategy of the "containment of communism" predominated in NATO. The bloc's basic military might was comprised of American nuclear weapons and strategic aviation. The allocations of the NATO countries went not to rebuild the national economy but rather for new military adventures. And these increased year after year. Thus, the military expenditures of all the bloc's nations in 1949 were 18.5 billion dollars (13.3 billion dollars for the United States), in 1953, these reached 65.5 billion dollars (around 52 billion dollars for the United States). At the end of 1950, the NATO JAF included 12 divisions.<sup>1</sup>

In the estimate of the bloc's military-political leadership, the United States was completely superior to the Soviet Union in nuclear weapons, however the NATO JAF in Europe in terms of strength and the capabilities of the general purpose forces were inferior to the armed forces of the USSR and the People's Democracies.

It must be assumed that for precisely this reason Washington at that time did not set out to initiate a war as it felt that the NATO Armed Forces would be unable to conduct successful offensive operations to back up the results of a nuclear attack and capture the territory of the Eastern European countries.

In the organizational development of the NATO JAF during this stage a policy was carried out of sharply increasing their combat and numerical strength. Thus, by the beginning of 1955, 50 ground forces divisions had been fielded, that is, over the 4 years their total number had increased by more than 4-fold. Here it must be remembered that the Warsaw Pact and, consequently, its Joint Armed Forces still did not exist.

Simultaneously, during this period the United States was rapidly developing its strategic offensive nuclear forces and was providing aid to Great Britain in developing its nuclear weapons.

Already in 1954, a NATO military infrastructure had already been established on the territory of America's Western European partners and this included 125 airfields, 300 long-distance communications installations, numerous training centers, radio and electronic reconnaissance stations and other installations.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the basic areas for the organizational development of the NATO Armed Forces during the first period were: the further development of the means of nuclear attack, a significant increase in the combat and numerical strength of the conventional armed forces and the operational equipping of the territories of the Western European countries as a staging area for attacking the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

The second stage in the development of the NATO JAF (1955-1962) was characterized by the development of tactical nuclear weapons and by the establishing of the nuclear forces of the European Theater of War.

In the opinion of the leadership of the North Atlantic Military Bloc, the achieved level in the strength of the JAF (50 divisions) did not ensure the carrying out of the main mission, eliminating the socialist system.

For increasing military might the military-political leadership of the United States and its NATO allies initiated activities in two areas. The first of them was to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in the European Theater of War. Already by 1953, the American forces in Europe began to receive delivery systems for tactical nuclear ammunition. In accord with the established policy, in 1961, over 100 battalions and batteries of atomic artillery, squadrons of medium-range ballistic missiles and flying bombs had already been organized while light bombers, tactical fighters and reconnaissance planes began to be reequipped as carriers of nuclear weapons.

The other area of increasing the bloc's military potential was to increase the fighting strength of the conventional armed forces and primarily by including West Germany in the military organization of this alliance.

In October 1954, at the NATO Paris Conference an agreement was signed by the imperialist nations of the bloc to remilitarize Western Germany and reestablish its armed forces consisting of 12 divisions of ground forces, air force and navy units. Here the West German armed forces were to be assigned the role of the general purpose shock forces of the North Atlantic Military Bloc. The American newspaper DAILY NEWS on 4 January 1956 wrote: "It was already clear to us several months after the war that the best bet of the West...is the greatest possible encouragement of the arming of West Germany."

The Soviet government and the governments of the other socialist countries, in becoming concerned by the increased military preparations in the West and the rise of a threat of a new world war, repeatedly raised the question of halting the arms race, on the consistent fulfillment of the agreements reached by the states in the anti-Hitler coalition, on the peaceful settlement of disputed political problems and the establishing of collective security in Europe.

At the Moscow (November-December 1956) Conference of European Nations on Ensuring Peace and Security in Europe it was stated that the NATO Paris agreements had significantly increased the threat of a new war. The conference's declaration pointed out that true security in Europe can be ensured only in the instance that a system of collective security would be instituted in the place of closed military groupings.

However, the Western countries, in disregarding the peace initiatives of the socialist states, continued a policy aimed at accelerating military preparations and the remilitarization of West Germany as well as at broadening the scale of the Cold War.

Thus, in accord with the American plans to win world domination, the NATO armed forces in the second stage were organized according to the coalition military strategy of "sword and shield" adopted by the bloc. The role of the "sword" was assigned to the American strategic nuclear forces with the mission of making a massed nuclear attack on the Soviet Union. The role of the "shield" by which one understood the NATO troops deployed in Europe consisted in the immediate utilization of the results of the nuclear attack in the aim of reinforcing its success and "liberating" the Eastern European countries. The basic efforts were focused on creating nuclear forces for the European Theater of War and on further developing the U.S. strategic offensive forces with a simultaneous rise in the might of the general purpose forces.

In the third stage (1962-1978) the Soviet successes achieved at the end of the 1950's in nuclear weapons development and missile building forced the military-political leadership of the United States and the other NATO countries to revise their views on the possible nature of conducting military operations in Europe.

During this period by the efforts of the American military in NATO a new coalition strategy of "flexible response" was born. It envisaged the preparation

and conduct against the socialist commonwealth countries of not only an all-out nuclear war but also limited wars which differed in terms of aims, scales and employed weapons.

Starting in 1962, the bloc's command began planning the conduct of military operations in Europe employing both nuclear weapons as well as just conventional ones. At the same time, a limited war employing conventional weapons was viewed merely as a first step on the way to escalating the armed conflict into an all-out nuclear war.

The American leadership realized that the growing of a limited war into an all-out one employing strategic nuclear forces inevitably would involve the making of retaliatory strikes against U.S. territory. In this context it set out to create conditions which would make it possible to wage a limited war with the Warsaw Pact countries within the limits of the European continent.

In striving for world domination, the military-political leadership of NATO headed by the United States under these conditions began carrying out an active policy of modernizing the armed forces and primarily the forward-based forces destined to make the first strike against the Warsaw Pact troops. NATO military expenditures rose from 71 billion dollars in 1962 up to 190 billion dollars in 1978, that is, approximately 3-fold.

Already by mid-1966, the obsolete nuclear weapons of the European Theater of War (the Redstone and Corporal guided missile launchers) had been completely replaced by more advanced operational-tactical missile systems. The corps and divisions of the armed forces of a majority of the NATO countries began receiving the Honest John unguided missile launchers, the U.S. and West German army corps were receiving the Sergeant guided missile launchers while the U.S. Ground Forces in Europe and the West German Air Force received the Pershing-1.

The further development of the forward-based nuclear weapons was carried out by increasing their number, improving the accuracy of hitting the target and increasing the range. By the end of 1977, the Pershing guided missile battalions had been armed with the more advanced Pershing-1A launchers and their total number had risen from 60 up to 180. The nuclear attack weapons of the army corps (the Sergeant and Honest John guided missiles) had been replaced by the new Lance missiles which in terms of mobility and accuracy characteristics (circular error probable (CEP) of 300 m) significantly surpassed the outdated systems. Here it is essential to point out that while previously the operational-tactical nuclear weapons were under the control of the commanders of the army corps of just the United States and West Germany, by 1978, they were in use in the corps of the other NATO countries, too.

By that time the number of nuclear artillery pieces had increased by several-fold and these were in use by the all-arms divisions of many of the bloc's countries while the range of fire had increased by approximately 2-fold (from 16-18 to 30 km). This made it possible for the NATO Command to give up the ineffective and comparatively vulnerable Honest John tactical missiles, having turned over their functions to the nuclear artillery.

During the third period of development of the NATO JAF, tactical aviation held a special place as the most powerful and effective (in the estimate of the bloc's command) means of delivering nuclear weapons of the theater of war. Here its organization and development were carried out in a direction of increasing the overall number of planes capable of carrying nuclear weapons, raising the range of flight, improving the performance of the planes and improving the systems for guiding and controlling the nuclear ammunition to the target. For example, over the 15 years the total number of aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons in Europe increased by 5-fold (from 300 in 1962 to over 1,500 in 1978), while the maximum flight range rose by more than 2.5-fold (from 2,400 km in 1962 up to 6,100 km in 1978).

As a whole, by 1978, the NATO JAF in the European Theater of War had over 2,800 tactical and operational-tactical delivery systems for nuclear weapons (not counting the medium-range delivery systems of Great Britain and France as well as the carrier-based ground attack aviation) and had stockpiled over 7,000 nuclear warheads of varying power (from several kilotons up to the megaton class).

Other areas for the organization and development of the NATO JAF were: improving conventional weapons, upgrading the organizational structure of the troops, increasing the number of formations and units as well as modernizing the troop and weapons control systems. The bloc's command paid basic attention to increasing the strike power of the established groupings of ground forces in the European Theater of War. Thus, while the overall number of divisions in Europe increased by 1.3-fold (from 52 to 69), the number of tank formations more than doubled (from 8 to 17). The ground forces formations and units received new weapons and military equipment which in terms of combat performance surpassed the weapons from the beginning of the 1960's by 2-2.5-fold. Virtually all the infantry formations had been reorganized as motorized-infantry and mechanized ones by the arming of them with modern tanks of the M-60, Leopard, Chieftain and AMX-30 types as well as their saturation with armored personnel carriers and infantry combat vehicles. All of this made it possible to significantly increase the offensive capabilities of both the individual formations and units as well as the assault groupings as a whole. The broad introduction of automated control systems made it possible for the NATO Command in a shorter period of time to organize combat and effectively control the troops on the battlefield.

It is essential to bear in mind that a rapid increase in the bloc's military might, particularly from the start of the 1970's, occurred in an atmosphere of a relative political lessening of tension in Europe, in a situation where upon the initiative of the socialist and developing states, the Helsinki Conference was prepared for and when the peoples of the entire world were hoping that it would be possible to turn political detente into a military detente. Moreover, in the first half of the 1970's, positive results were achieved in Soviet-American relations and a number of important documents were signed such as: "Principles of Relationships Between the USSR and the United States," "The Treaty Between the USSR and United States on Limiting Antimissile Defense Systems," "A Provisional Agreement Between the USSR and the United States on Certain Measures in the Area of Limiting Strategic Offensive Weapons" and others.<sup>5</sup>



The official start to the fourth stage in the development of the bloc's armed forces was made by the Washington Session of the NATO Council (May 1978) where a long-term military program for increasing the arms race and planned for 15-20 years was adopted. However, in actual terms the new increase in the military potential of the North Atlantic Alliance had started significantly earlier. The ink on the Final Act signed by the heads of state of Europe and North America at Helsinki was not even dry when the U.S. military-political leadership demanded a significant increase in national military expenditures from its European allies. In May 1977, this demand by the American leadership was satisfied as an official decision was adopted by the NATO Military Planning Committee and this obliged all the bloc's nations which were part of its military organization, starting in the 1977-1978 fiscal year, to annually increase their military expenditures by 3 percent. But already in May 1978, in a discussion of the long-range military program at a session of the NATO Council, the U.S. Secretary of Defense stated that the annual 3-percent increase would not be sufficient for carrying it out on time.

The long-term military program the fulfillment of which according to the humblest estimates will cost the NATO member nations 80 billion dollars, envisages a simultaneous increase in the strategic nuclear weapons, the development of European medium-range nuclear weapons and a further improvement in the general purpose forces. Here particular attention has been paid to increasing the offensive capabilities of the armed forces groupings positioned in direct proximity to the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact states.

In the program a major place has been given over to improving the mobilizational readiness of the reserve contingents, to the standardizing of weapons, to developing and delivering to the troops modern electronic combat systems and equipment as well as to modernizing the joint air defense system of NATO in Europe. This involves primarily the warning, control and shortening the time required to bring the men and equipment to full combat readiness in the interests of a maximum weakening of the retaliatory strike.

Thus, just 3 years after the Helsinki Agreement, the NATO long-range military program marked a beginning to a new increase in the arms race and an abrupt about face was made back to the times of the Cold War and direct political confrontation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist commonwealth states.

The ultimate aim of the bloc's long-range program is to achieve military supremacy over the Warsaw Pact Joint Armed Forces by developing the European "NATO triad" which, as conceived by the Western military specialists, should include:

1) The "Euro-strategic forces" consisting of 464 American land-based cruise missiles with a range up to 2,500 km; 108 American Pershing-2 launchers of analogous range and high strike precision (a CEP of 30 m); 100 strategic bombers of the British and French air forces, 18 launchers for the French medium-range ballistic missiles (3,000 km); 16 nuclear missile submarines of the U.S., British and French navies (missile launch range from 4,000 to 7,000 km);

2) The nuclear forces of the European theaters of war including up to 350 operational-tactical and tactical launchers; up to 2,000 nuclear artillery pieces and over 1,000 aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons in the NATO tactical aviation;

3) Conventional forces which would include more than 3 million men, 94 divisions (counting Spain), 25,000 tanks, around 20,000 guns and mortars, over 3,500 combat aircraft and up to 900 combat ships.

The NATO command has proposed that the further development of the ground forces be carried out by increasing the proportional amount of tank formations and units; by increasing the mobility of the troops and improving their control by a fewer number of troop formations; establishing in the army corps and divisions multipurpose subunits and units such as a helicopter designed for fire support and transporting troops to the battlefield; increasing in the corps and divisions the reinforcements in the aim of establishing stronger tank, artillery, antitank, engineer and other special reserves in organizing and conducting combat.

The bloc's leadership by the end of the 1980's has planned to significantly update the tank fleet of the ground forces, and to arm the formations and units with up to 9,000 new tanks (Abrams, Leopard-2 and Chieftain) which surpass the present-day NATO tanks by 1.5-2-fold in performance.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, the military strategists of the NATO bloc are endeavoring to ensure military superiority over the Warsaw Pact armed forces and primarily to create a potential for a first debilitating attack against the Soviet Union and the socialist commonwealth nations.

Inevitably the question arises: are such actions valid? Possibly the United States and Western Europe are actually threatened from the "East" as Western propaganda has been trumpeting since the time of W. Churchill, in exacerbating the international situation and poisoning the minds of the population in their countries? The entire historical experience in the development of international relations since the Great October Socialist Revolution convincingly shows that the Soviet Union has never threatened and does not threaten anyone or any place. Moreover, one of the first documents adopted by Soviet power was Lenin's Peace Decree and all the activities of the CPSU and the Soviet government are dedicated to its spirit and letter. Under the conditions of the constantly growing aggressiveness of imperialism and the threat of its starting of a new, most destructive and dangerous world war, the Soviet Union together with the other socialist commonwealth states has steadily and unswervingly been in favor of a lessening of tension, the limiting and complete banning of all types of weapons of mass destruction, primarily nuclear, and reducing armed forces and weapons.

At the same time, the CPSU and the Soviet government have shown constant concern for strengthening the defense might of the Soviet Armed Forces in order at any stage of a hike in the imperialist arms race and military preparations, including the deployment of the new American medium-range missiles in Europe, our troops together with the troops of the other Warsaw Pact states would be ready to deal a worthy rebuff to the aggressor.

The will and determination of the Soviet Union and the socialist commonwealth countries to actively oppose the ultra-reactionary aggressive forces of imperialism headed by the United States were reaffirmed in the Political Declaration of the Warsaw Pact States as well as during the meeting of the party and state

leaders of Bulgaria, Hungary, the GDR, Poland, Romania, the USSR and Czechoslovakia in June of this year in Moscow.

In his speech at the June (1983) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet Yu. V. Andropov emphasized that peaceful coexistence is objectively aided by a military strategic equilibrium between socialism and imperialism. The achieving of this equilibrium has been one of the most important results of recent decades. From our people and the other socialist commonwealth countries, this has required a great deal of effort and energy and we will not allow it to be disrupted. "We in the future will do everything necessary to ensure the security of our nation, our friends and allies and we will increase the combat might of the Soviet Armed Forces as an important factor in restraining the aggressive aspirations of the imperialist reaction."<sup>7</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See S. Vladimirov, L. Teplov, "Varshavskiy Dogovor i NATO: dva kursa, dve politiki" [The Warsaw Pact and NATO: Two Courses, Two Policies], Moscow, Mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, 1979, pp 30-31.
- <sup>2</sup> [Not in text]
- <sup>3</sup> See S. Vladimirov, L. Teplov, op. cit., p 31.
- <sup>4</sup> [Not in text]
- <sup>5</sup> "Sovetskaya Programma mira v deystvii" [The Soviet Peace Program in Action], Moscow, Izd-vo APN, 1972, pp 16-45.
- <sup>6</sup> See "Operatsiya i boy" [Operation and Battle], Voenizdat, 1983, pp 3-12.
- <sup>7</sup> "Materialy Plenuma TsK KPSS 14-15 iyunya 1983 g." [Materials of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee of 14-15 June 1983], Moscow, Politizdat, 1983, p 25.

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## DELIVERY OF WEAPONS, AMMUNITION TO BESEIGED LENINGRAD TRACED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 1, Jan 84 (signed to press 27 Dec 83) pp 91-93

[Article by Col Gen Art (Ret) I. Volkotrubenko: "Supplying Beseiged Leningrad with Weapons and Ammunition"]

[Text] On 8 September 1941, the Nazi troops succeeded in reaching Lake Ladoga in the area of Shlisselberg and sealing off Leningrad from the land. Only the small body of water of Lake Ladoga which was within the range of Nazi artillery and air strikes was the sole line of communication connecting beseiged Leningrad with the rest of the nation. The frontline city with a million inhabitants was to experience enormous difficulties and hardships.

Hunger, cold, systematic artillery shelling and bombing did not break the will of the heroic defenders and workers of Leningrad. Under the leadership of the city party organization, the Leningrad workers in the beseiged city organized the production of tanks, guns, mortars and other weapons as well as ammunition, powder, explosives and fuzes. From September 1941 up to the end of the year alone, the Leningraders supplied the front with 10,000 automatics, 7,700 mortars, 2,300 guns of various caliber and 41 BM-8 combat vehicles.<sup>1</sup>

All the elements of the rounds manufactured by local industry were delivered to the front artillery dump and from here they were finally made into shells, mines and grenades. During the first half year of the war, the Leningrad Front consumed 3.4 million shells, including 3.2 million delivered by Leningrad industry.<sup>2</sup>

Under the conditions of the blockade, the workers of the hero city not only supplied weapons to the Leningrad Front but helped in other things. Thus, in November 1941, when the enemy was pushing fiercely toward Moscow, upon a decision of the military council of the Leningrad front, the artillery supply directorate of the front dispatched to Moscow 926 mortars and 431 guns.<sup>3</sup> This mission was to be carried out by the front artillery dump No 75 (chief of the dump, Col D. K. Maguta). The guns broken down were delivered to Cherepovets Station by air transports. A brigade of machinists from shop No 5 of the artillery dump had also been sent here. At Cherepovets Station the brigade assembled the artillery pieces, loaded them on the railroad flatcars and dispatched them to Moscow. At the same time, the Leningrad Front sent to Moscow 40,000 armor piercing shells for 76-mm cannons.<sup>4</sup> In December 1941, 100

regimental cannons and 65 mortars were dispatched across the Lifeline to the Volkhov Front from Leningrad.<sup>5</sup>

Over the period of the blockade, 294 Leningrad enterprises manufactured 43,000 automatics, 3,000 machine guns, 11,000 mortars, 4,166 guns of 45- and 76-mm caliber,<sup>6</sup> making a weighty contribution to the defeat of the Nazi invaders.

The Main Artillery Directorate (GAU) took every measure to supply the Leningrad Front with weapons and ammunition, basically those types which were not produced in Leningrad. During the period from September through November 1941, the front received 1,500 railway cars of weapons and ammunition.

When Hq SHC began to prepare the operation to break through the Leningrad blockade, the artillery commander of the Leningrad Front, Maj Gen Art G. F. Odintsov arrived at the GAU with a request to supply the front with the necessary amount of weapons and ammunition. The request was carefully studied and clarified and the dates for delivering the weapons and ammunition to the front were approved.

The artillery freight dispatched to the Leningrad Front by rail was unloaded at the transloading base of Kabon. From here by water or after the formation of ice by motor transport over the ice route these were moved across Ladoga to the transloading base of Osinovets. On the western bank of the lake, the freight was again loaded onto rail transport and delivered to Leningrad. The rail station of Ladozhskoye Ozero was connected also with the city by a military road. Over it artillery freight was also delivered to the frontline artillery dumps by motor transport.

The work of moving the artillery freight across the lake was carried out by the forces of the two front artillery dumps (Nos 1480 and 1494) deployed on the eastern and western shores of the lake. Just in October 1942, these dumps transloaded 2,582 and in January 1943, 2,674 and 2,498 cars, respectively.<sup>7</sup> In stormy and bad weather, during the day and at night, the work went on at the transloading bases. People often dropped from exhaustion and fatigue but they immediately got up and went back to work. Everyone burned with the single desire of delivering as much ammunition as possible to the besieged city.

As a result of the intense work carried out by the artillery supply bodies, by the start of the operation to break through the Leningrad blockade the 67th Army of the Leningrad Front, the 2d Assault Army and the 8th Army of the Volkhov Front had stockpiled 3.3 million shells and mines, 127 million cartridges, and around 1 million hand grenades. The 67th Army had created the largest stocks (over 1.47 million shells and around 45 million cartridges).<sup>8</sup>

At the end of 1943, Hq SHC confronted the troops of the Leningrad and Volkhov Fronts with the mission of defeating the enemy Army Group North around Leningrad and Novgorod, finally lifting the blockade from Leningrad and liberating Leningrad Oblast. The artillery commanders from these fronts arrived at the GAU. The quantity and dates of ammunition and weapons to be dispatched to the fronts were approved and confirmed by Hq SHC.

During December 1943 and the first 10 days of January 1944, the GAU supplied these fronts with 1,000 guns and mortars, 50,000 rifles and automatics, 4,000

machine guns, 4 million shells, 282 million cartridges and over a million hand grenades.<sup>9</sup>

The artillery supply service of the Leningrad Front did great work to stockpile and safekeep the significant amount of ammunition needed for conducting the operation. Many front and army ammunition dumps were located just 6-8 km from the front line. And only due to skillful camouflaging during combat operations around Leningrad did these dumps suffer insignificant losses from artillery fire and air strikes with just 11 cars of ammunition being lost.<sup>10</sup>

The rear services of the Leningrad Front from January 1943 were based on the sole railroad running from Volkhovstroy Station. All the lines of communications of the front (the regulating station of Volkhovstroy) were within the range of enemy artillery fire and this significantly complicated and impeded the organizing of the delivery of artillery freight to the front and evacuation into the rear of the nation.

It was even harder to organize the delivery of weapons and ammunition to the 2d Assault Army which at that time was on the defensive on the maritime staging area. Especially for supplying this army with ammunition, the front artillery dump No 909 opened up two sections on the Finland Railroad. Freight for the army was delivered to these sections by rail and were here transloaded onto water transport for further transport across the Gulf of Finland. For transporting ammunition by water, barges were employed and these were towed by minesweepers and self-propelled coastal vessels. Each convoy was provided with a surface and air cover.

On 12 January 1944, 12 76-mm ZIS-3 cannons and 48 45-mm 1942-model cannons were airferried to the 2d Assault Army. The 76-mm cannons were transported broken down one per plane with the barrels removed. The gun barrel was suspended beneath the aircraft since the system could not be loaded into the aircraft assembled because of the large size.<sup>11</sup>

Due to the fact that motor transport was under the control of the front rear bodies and, as a rule, there was not enough of it, the requests from the artillery supply chief for allocating transport were not fully met. In the course of a successful offensive, the troops were unable to carry all the existing supplies of ammunition on their own transport and a portion was left in the previous area. Thus, in the course of an operation on the Leningrad Front at the individual army dumps and their divisions some 300 railroad cars were abandoned and at certain divisional dumps and artillery firing positions some 200 cars.<sup>12</sup> This led to a situation where with a sufficient amount of ammunition on the front the units and formations engaged in combat were caught short.

But, regardless of all the difficulties, the artillery supply service of the Leningrad Front fully supplied the troops with the weapons and ammunition needed for the successful conduct of combat.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 217, inv. 1236, file 51, sheets 60-61.

- <sup>2</sup> Ibid., sheet 64.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., folio 81, inv. 12079, file 59, sheet 22.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., folio 217, inv. 1236, file 52, sheet 10.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., sheet 25.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., file 51, sheets 60-64.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., folio 81, inv. 12077, file 18, sheet 92.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., inv. 12079, file 49, sheet 150.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., inv. 12077, file 18, sheet 18.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., sheet 23.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., inv. 12079, file 266, sheet 79.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., sheet 168.

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## MECHANIZED CORPS EXERCISES ON EVE OF WORLD WAR II DESCRIBED

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[Article by Col (Ret) I. Baranov: "On the Question of Combat Training for Mechanized Corps in the Kiev Special Military District on the Eve of the War"]

[Text] The combat experience gained in the area of Lake Khasan on the Khalkhin-Gol River in the liberation campaigns into the Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia and particularly with Finland during the winter of 1939-1940 had disclosed a number of weak points in the combat training of the Red Army armored troops and in particular in the use of combat equipment, in organizing cooperation of these troops with the units and subunits of the other branches of troops and aviation in breaking through enemy defenses as well as in the operational-tactical training of the command personnel.<sup>1</sup> The plenum of the party Central Committee held in March 1940 brought up these shortcomings. In accord with its instructions, the Order of the People's Commissar of Defense [NKO] No 120 of 16 May 1940 "On Combat and Political Training for the Troops for the 1940 Summer Period" was drawn up and issued.<sup>2</sup> This document drew particular attention of the command of the border military districts to working on the questions of the combat employment of the newly organized mechanized corps in exercises and maneuvers as these would provide an opportunity for the command of the units and the formations to more thoroughly analyze the nature of modern combat and an operation and disclose the most effective ways for using armored equipment under the complex conditions of active combat.

By the Order of the NKO No 254 of 26 July 1940, the Kiev Special Military District was given the mission of conducting a number of exercises in the summer and autumn of 1940 on the subject "An Army Offensive and the Committing of a Mechanized Corps to the Breakthrough." Involved in the exercises were the IV Mechanized Corps (commander, Maj Gen Tank Trps M. I. Potapov) and consisting of the 8th and 10th Tank Divisions and the 81st Mechanized Division, the 3d Motorcycle Regiment, combat support and service units; the VI Rifle Corps of the 6th Army and the 6th Bomber Air Division.

The first command-staff exercise in committing a mechanized corps to a breakthrough was conducted at the beginning of August 1940. Here they worked on the questions of the cooperation of the IV Mechanized Corps with the other branches of ground troops and the aviation. The exercise was led by the district commander, Army Gen G. K. Zhukov. Taking an active part in working out the

questions of the cooperation of the corps with the other branches of troops and aviation were the formation's chief of staff, Gen A. A. Mart'yanov, the chief of the artillery and engineer service as well as officers from the staffs of the VI Rifle Corps and the 6th Air Division. The author of this article took a direct part in this and subsequent exercises.<sup>3</sup> In the course of the exercises shortcomings were disclosed in the organizing of cooperation of the corps units with the other branches of troops and aviation. The cooperation tables worked out were not marked by concreteness and did not fully correspond to the situation. For this reason, proceeding from the experience of the exercises and an analysis of the disclosed shortcomings, in the briefing G. K. Zhukov ordered the commanders and staffs of the units and formations to work out all the combat documents more effectively, particularly those dealing with the questions of organizing cooperation.

The first troop (training) exercise of the IV Mechanized Corps and the VI Rifle Corps involving aviation was also conducted in August 1940. Like the command-staff exercise, this was devoted to working out the question of committing the mechanized corps to a breakthrough.

One should note the fact that in preparing for the exercise, G. K. Zhukov and M. I. Potapov examined the questions related to selecting the assembly area for the mechanized corps, its distance from the line of commitment to the breakthrough and the order of the moving up of the troops to it. G. K. Zhukov together with M. I. Potapov decided to set the assembly area of the mechanized corps troops 15 km from the commitment line and this, in their opinion, would exclude the detection of the formation by the enemy. A decision was also taken to commit the corps to the breakthrough in march columns along two parallel routes.

On the eve of the exercise, G. K. Zhukov spoke to the commanders of the formations and units participating in it. He emphasized that this was the first time that a troop exercise involving the new type of mechanized corps was being held in the Red Army and ordered the command personnel to creatively approach the carrying out of the set missions. Georgiy Konstantinovich [Zhukov] took up individually the questions of organizing cooperation of the resources in committing the corps to the breakthrough and proposed working out not a textual but rather a graphic cooperation table.

In the course of the exercise G. K. Zhukov and M. I. Potapov were present at the command posts of the divisions as well as in certain regiments and they observed the troop actions. The exercise as a whole was successfully carried out. In analyzing it the district commander once again drew attention to the need for more detailed organization of cooperation on all levels as well as to the training of the tank and motor vehicle drivers in order to exclude "blockages" and the abandoning of equipment on the routes of advance. The officers from the operations section of the mechanized corps staff were given the task, considering the results of the exercise, to work out a variation of the corps cooperation table and a schematic diagram for its configuration for a commitment to the breakthrough with the necessary calculations. In accord with the diagram of the configuration, ahead of each column there should be a traffic support detachment consisting of combat engineer subunits, a company of tanks with a party of submachine gunners and a battery of antitank guns. The rears of the

columns were to be brought up by the rear subunits and units covered by light tanks and motorized infantry. The artillery was to be spread out along the entire depth of both columns in the event of repelling surprise attacks by enemy tanks. The antiaircraft artillery was closer to the head of the columns ready, upon reaching the operational depth of the enemy defenses, to deploy and repel enemy air raids.

The cooperation table worked out by the corps staff showed the actions of the ground troops and aviation during the period of the assembly of the corps at the jump-off line, in committing it to the breakthrough and on the offensive deep in the enemy defenses.

The second troop (training) exercise for the IV Mechanized Corps and the VI Rifle Corps was held in mid-September 1940 considering the experience of the previously held exercises. In the course of the exercise all the command personnel was to pay attention to the working out of such questions as increasing the rate of advance of the mechanized corps in the operational depth of enemy defenses, employing envelopments and outflankings of enemy strongpoints, breaking through defensive lines deep in the enemy defenses without a halt, defeating the enemy in a meeting engagement by encirclement, breaking up and destroying the enemy troops piecemeal.

On 26-28 September 1940, the final exercise of the 6th Army was held on the subject "An Army Offensive and the Commitment of a Mechanized Corps to a Breakthrough."<sup>4</sup> It was attended by the chief of the General Staff, Army Gen K. A. Meretskov, Army Gen G. K. Zhukov, as well as representatives from the Main Directorate of the Motor and Armored Troops and the Military Academy of the General Staff. The exercise was directed by the People's Commissar of Defense, Mar SU S. K. Timoshenko. He had high praise for the results of the exercise and commended its most outstanding participants.

On 16 October 1940, in accord with the directive from the district commander of 8 August 1940, an experimental exercise was held on the subject "The March and Meeting Engagement of a Mechanized Corps." Participating in it were the staffs and troops of the 8th Tank Division and the 81st Motorized Division from the IV Mechanized Corps. The aim of the exercise was to test the possibility of preparing and conducting a march in a short period of time as well as working out the questions of informing the subordinate units and subunits of a decision taken by the corps commander in the course of the march to make an abrupt turn of the columns with the coming out of the troops on new routes ready to conduct a meeting engagement.

The results of the exercise were viewed affirmatively by G. K. Zhukov. The leadership of the corps (including the article's author) received valuable gifts for its high quality preparation and execution.

In conclusion it must be pointed out that on the eve of the war, important significance was given to the combat training of the mechanized corps on the basis of the combat experience of the motor and armored troops in 1938-1940 and to seeking out ways and methods for exploiting success in offensive operations employing mobile formations. At the all-army conference of higher command and political personnel in December 1940, the exercises held in the Kiev Special

Military District received high praise. The documents worked out in the course of the exercises were issued in a written form to the command personnel of the mechanized corps in the border military districts.

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> "Sovetskiye tankovyye voyska 1941-1945" [The Soviet Tank Troops 1941-1945], Voenizdat, 1973, p 16.
- <sup>2</sup> "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945" [History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945], Vol 1, Voenizdat, 1960, p 467.
- <sup>3</sup> I. I. Baranov at that time was performing the duties of the chief of the operations section on the staff of the IV Mechanized Corps.
- <sup>4</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 3429, inv. 1, file 1, sheets 1-8.

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